University of Alberta

Personal Narratives and Ritual Observance:
How personal narratives based on ritual observances shaped the family identities of two groups of second generation Ukrainian-Canadian sisters

by

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Canada

Katherine: I long to go back and see the change of seasons. To see the northern lights.

Monica: Which season would you like to see change into what season?

Alice: To see the harvest moon.

Katherine: I'd like to see the hoarfrost on the fences. November, really. To see the moon dogs.

Alice: The northern lights were mostly everywhere, with snow on the ground.

Katherine: The stars were so close.

Conversation about Soda Lake at a family potluck
Walnut Creek, California
18 September 1993

for

Vera, my mother

November 8th, 1916-March 22nd, 2004

And for

Sarah and Addie

who "held me in the light."

Abstract

The root question in this dissertation is: *How do personal narratives about ritual observance reveal aspects of family identity?* A qualitative study, this dissertation provides an ample description—based on interviews with two groups of Ukrainian-Canadian (and Ukrainian-American) sisters—of how their two families developed collective identities. The sisters were progeny of Ukrainian-speaking Bukovynian and Galician pioneers who settled in the late 1890s on the western prairies of the Northwest Territory in Canada, later to become the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. The sisters' personal narratives, derived from taped interviews, reveal the R and K families undergoing a sea change of collective redefinition as they acculturate to a new life in Canada.

The argument herein focuses on personal narratives about ritual observances as a unified means to understanding the underlying nature of how family identity develops. Personal narratives function as a kind of folkloric/historical lens that reveals key elements that shape family identity. The dissertation attempts to show how, in two otherwise "parallel" families, contrasting attitudes towards ritual observation are central components of their collective selves. The dissertation presumes first, that personal narratives are a viable means of recognizing how aspects of family identity are expressed and transmitted; and, second, that personal narratives based on ritual observance sharpen the focus on this process of expression and transmission. Ultimately this study reveals the value of personal narratives as vectors of the transmission and expression of family and the role of ritual observance in the development of family identity.

Acknowledgments

There are many individuals who have helped in the formulation and realization of this dissertation, indeed they comprise a veritable village of family, friends, academic advisors and colleagues. There is simply no way for me to name each and every person who has encouraged and aided me, yet I wish to extend my sincere thanks to all. My dissertation advisor, Dr. Andriy Nahachewsky, and his sage colleague, Dr. Bohdan Medwidsky, have been key throughout the process of research, organization and writing this study and to them, I owe major thanks. My faculty advisors from further afield, Drs. Kononenko, Skrypnek, Swyripa, and Tye, who have carefully read and made comments on how to refine the focus here have provided me with invaluable advice. It is no easy task in an over-crowded schedule to read through such a document and still make fresh and insightful comments.

Beyond the University of Alberta, I wish to extend sincere thanks to Peter Wiley of San Francisco for his critical support early on and to Dr. Gene Brucker, Professor Emeritus of History at the University of California, Berkeley who gave me excellent practical research advice. Dr. Alan Dundes, Professor of Folklore and Anthropology at the University of California, Berkeley added his trenchant opinions to the mix, and at the same time generously invited me to contribute to his graduate seminar. Dr. Linda Dégh, Professor Emeritus of Folklore at Indiana University has been consistently enthusiastic, supportive and with her extraordinary cardamom coffee, uniquely soothing.

Although we were nearly all strangers to one another before I began this project, I have been warmly embraced by my Canadian family—particularly Betty and Lawrence Tymko, Jim and Marie Gordon-Kindrake, Hazel and Julian Ulan and Kay Mitchell— and aided by them in every way imaginable. I cannot think of the development of this project without our discussions over dinner and the many insights that came out of family get-togethers. My graduate student colleagues, too, have been a wonderful fund of encouragement and information. First and foremost among them, the inimitable Anna Kuranicheva, my dear friend, who month after month, vehemently insisted that the Ukrainian preposition "*do*" always and only takes the Genitive case. And, of course, Nadya Foty, who, with her songs, melted the hearts of Soda Lake/Pruth community stalwarts on a number of my Alberta fieldtrips, thus easing the way for me.

Many thanks as well to the neighbors, friends and extended family who agreed to be interviewed for this study. To those whose interviews appear here my gratitude goes without saying: each of you (out of your souls) helped to write a chapter of fleeting Ukrainian-Canadian cultural history.

Above all, I wish to thank Pennfield Jensen, my husband and dearest friend, whose insistence upon persistence, good writing, structural clarity, and Chulula sauce sustained me throughout the difficulties—namely, the vagaries of international study, Penn's own serious illness, and the death of my mother—of writing this dissertation. Finally, there is Quark, who, sufficiently bribed with potato treats, never doubted my direction.

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Introduction

> The process of writing an ethnography is akin to quilt-making. I have all of these seemingly disparate bits and pieces in the form of participants' testimonies, my own cumulative scratchings, as well as different theoretical strands and I wish to stitch all of them together to form a coherent pattern. (Ifekwunigwe 1999: 57)

Introductory thoughts

Shortly after New Year's Day, during my third year of graduate study at the University of Alberta, my husband and I hosted an open house for our K family and R family relatives, my first-cousins, aunts and uncles, all residents of Edmonton, all Ukrainian-Canadians.[1] Gatherings of this sort among Ukrainian-Canadians usually involve food and accordingly, I had prepared a colorful array of fruit, cheeses, breads, Christmas cookies and candy sweets, namely chocolate.

It came as no surprise that K cousins Betty and Hazel and aunt, Kay, brought food to our open house; it is their habit to be generous and thoughtful in this manner. However, I was startled to realize that not only had each of these women brought *kutia*[2] to the gathering, but that they wanted a pause in the congenial millings-about, in order that each person present partake of a small amount of *kutia* before all else. This came into consciousness as I listened to Betty, Hazel and Kay in my kitchen discussing the merits and differences among their *kutia* recipes. I quickly summoned all the custard cups and small spoons in my pantry, put several dollops of *kutia* into each cup and passed them out, one to each guest. With Hazel and Betty taking the lead, we offered good wishes for the coming year to all, everyone sampled the *kutia* in some silence and then the visiting resumed.

Distracted as a hostess, I only later began to think about what had transpired. How remarkable that, for a gathering to celebrate family and the newly minted year, three K family members had brought *kutia* and insisted on its being served at a particular moment and in a particular way. How remarkable that the R family relatives, an uncle, a great-aunt and a first-cousin, expressed surprise and only vague recognition at the serving of *kutia*. The difference between the two groups of relatives was striking. For K family members *kutia* carried significant symbolic and ritual import; for R family members, not so. Why was this? Why such a difference between two families who on the surface could be considered similar, even, in my parents' case, intermarried. It is this difference that has in part informed the research and writing of this dissertation.

Although the previous account reveals a distinct difference between the Rs and the Ks relative to contemporary observance of rituals (however diluted by time and assimilation), it is difficult to pinpoint where and when I actually began to pursue the heritage of the women in my parents' families. Both branches grew up as second-generation Ukrainian-Canadians. I do recall that during my time at Laguna Gloria Art Museum in Austin, Texas (now Austin Museum of Art), where I was the principal curator and occasionally able to coordinate folk art exhibitions, I came to realize how rich a folkloric resource my own family was. But the problem remained—how best to tap into that resource? It is also true that, because of my degree in Comparative Literature, I was drawn to oral history and to the study of texts. Thus it made sense to me that interviewing these women could be an excellent way to capture the different stories those women might reveal, if properly approached.

In this context and before this study became a study, I sought out Katherine R because I understood that she had a fascinating wealth of family recollections in which I was deeply interested. With a tape recorder running between us, I sat with Katherine and we talked. Later, in the process of transcribing my series of interviews with Katherine, I began to realize that she framed her recollections of R family life in personal narratives. Additionally, I was intrigued that Katherine's narratives seemed to focus on ritual observance,[3] that is, activities in the context of Ukrainian-Canadian calendar rituals[4] and rite of passage rituals[5] that she had experienced as a child and young adult growing up on her parents' homestead.

Katherine was not intentionally trying to inform me about the R family's ritual observance through her personal narratives. She had no reason to do so, it was not the point of our talks. She was trying to communicate her perceptions about the family; it seemed easier for her, or perhaps more to her wont, to use narratives about ritual observance as a way to talk about the family—who they were and why they developed in the way that they had. Thus, Katherine's particular perspective about R family identity, what she carried away from her formative experiences, she chose to communicate through personal narratives that highlighted ritual observance. From these initial interviews with Katherine, I began to infer the root-elements of my "approach" to the R and K sisters—that family identity is expressed in subtle and nuanced ways, and could be transmitted by means of personal narrative.

Ritual observance is noticeably a group- and culture-oriented activity, in part because rituals provide the sense of being part of a group (Myerhoff 1992: 151). By selecting and shaping a fragment of social life, ritual defines a portion of reality (Myerhoff 1992: 129). That Katherine's personal narratives tended to embrace the moments when ritual observance was active among R family members seemed entirely natural. Interviewing Katherine created an "aha!" experience for me,[6] and ultimately led to the formulation of this dissertation's hypothesis.

Hypothesis

This dissertation is based on two assumptions: first, that personal narratives are a viable means of recognizing how aspects of family identity are expressed and transmitted; and, second, that personal narratives based on ritual observance sharpen the focus on this process of expression and transmission. By "family identity" I mean the family's subjective and collective sense of its character and of what it believes about itself and the larger world.[7] The overarching purpose of this dissertation is to examine the formative effects of personal narratives on family identity. This examination takes place through an ample description—based on interviews with the women— of how two families developed their collective identities. The personal narratives are derived from interviews with family members and reveal the R and K families undergoing a sea change of collective redefinition as they acculturate to a new life in Canada. The narratives reveal two collective family identities, both in a state of flux, and both carried forward by each family. Succinctly stated, the root question in this dissertation is: *How do personal narratives about ritual observance reveal aspects of family identity?*

It is universally understood that all family identities evolve in the context of the total environment in which they reside. These personal narratives allow us to observe, as one might through a glass-bottom boat, a specific time in the evolutionary flow of two families. In saying this, it is important to acknowledge that the observer in the boat may in fact be influencing that evolutionary flow in ways that are as yet unknown. Indeed, the act of writing this dissertation brings elements of each family's development into greater clarity, and focusing on aspects of each family's character may function as a catalyst of change for that very character. The dissertation itself may enrich and stir the mixture of what each family holds to be true and essential about itself, and is thus a reflexive and creative project.[8]

The "narrative ecology" (McAdams 2004: 247) of the R and K families, that is, the history of each family's attitude towards sharing family information through narratives, is an interesting issue. It has been put forward by careful readers of this dissertation that perhaps each family's narrative ecology is recent, based on contemporary family relations and adjusted to accommodate the dissertation interviews to cover previously un-narrated family material. It has also been proposed that the narrative ecology in this dissertation is a result of immigration from Alberta to the United States, which took place in both families, during the 1930s and 1940s. Thus, after spending their youths in relatively active ritual observation, the various R and K family members distanced themselves from their background once they arrived in the U.S. where they were exposed to a more urban worldview. The suggestion is that the R family in particular came to distance itself from the experience of former ritual observance and thus "retro-fitted" their narratives to adjust what they wished to be known about the family.

From the information I have gained growing up as a family member and from the more recent experience of interviewing the Rs and the Ks for the dissertation, I am firmly convinced that each family's narrative ecology was already established and smoothly-functioning shortly after immigration to Canada. In the K family, fashioning family events into personal narratives and then crafting them into family stories was a much-practiced art, embraced by the entire group, from the grandparent generation (Maksym and Annie H) onward. K family narratives reflected and embraced family activity—ritual observance being included in family activity—and communicated family activity to friends and community.

From personal experience, I know that R family narrative style has remained relatively constant over time, that is, a particular event is narrated somewhat reluctantly and with a slightly skeptical—and even censorial—flavor. Narratives are shared to reiterate or to establish an "understood" fact, not necessarily to stitch together family, friends or community. The R family narratives derive from a desire to represent the family "truthfully," no matter how romantically or unromantically they look upon family heritage. It would seem that R siblings have felt and continue to feel duty-bound to impart critical information in their narratives about the family, but are not, as a group, particularly comfortable as storytellers or see storytelling as a bonding activity. Katherine is the one exception to this observation. Thus there is a difference between the two families in their narrative stance, but the narrative ecology is long-standing and not adjusted to more recent conditions of geography or to a pressure to perform for a semi-published study.

In addressing how these two families utilize truthfulness and storytelling in their respective narratives, I wish first to assert that personal narratives—like family stories[9]—reflect essential aspects of the systemic nature of the family; they are part of "a family's narrative ecology" (McAdams 2004: 247). As such, in their observance or in their breach of observance, they possess a constitutive function—communicating, negotiating and renegotiating family identity (Pratt & Fiese 2004: 17). This constitutive function is what this dissertation will attempt to reveal. It is commonly understood (by folklorists and ethnographers) that a family's shared beliefs are carried and transmitted through ritual observance—that it is through ritual observance that family bonds are reaffirmed. However, the opposite is equally true, and in an assimilating culture those ritual elements that are lost, as well as retained, are significant markers in the progression of family identity formation. The rituals that a family chooses to observe (or not) serve to convey to its members who they are and how they fit into the scheme of the family system, and additionally, how the family fits (or doesn't fit, or adapts) into the community in which it lives.

My objective is to show how personal narratives—in the context of ritual observance, gathered from the second-generation women of two Ukrainian-Canadian families, the Rs and the Ks, establishing themselves from 1903 onwards in east central Alberta—reveal two different manifestations of family identity. In addition, I attempt to illustrate how these manifestations were modulated, over time, by the gradual retreat from Old World ritual observance, and with that retreat, gradual alterations in self-awareness with regard to family configurations of the two sibling groups. Ultimately, this dissertation describes two different ways of adjusting to the Ukrainian-Canadian experience from the turn of the century onward.

Context(s)

The second-generation of Ukrainian-Canadian women from whom the personal narratives have been gathered are the R sisters (Katherine, Nancy, Vera, Alice and Anne) and the K sisters (Kay, Pauline and Annie).[10] The context for their narratives is multi-layered. It is constituted by contemporary factors, personal factors, factors of heritage and certain general features.

All of these interviews were conducted over approximately a ten-year period, beginning in 1994. As stated earlier, I started with Katherine R. I went on to Nancy, and then Vera, Alice, and Anne. Margaret, the sixth R sister, declined to be interviewed. The geographical logistics of the R sister interviews from 1994 to 2003 led to travels to Edmonton, Calgary, Bloomington (Indiana), Cleveland and San Francisco.[11] In all, there were nineteen interviews carried out with the R sisters. After I had moved to Edmonton to study at the University of Alberta, I was able to get to know the K sisters, and to interview them as well, It was Kay who introduced me to Pauline and Annie and five interviews among them ensued.[12] Geographical logistics for the K sisters took place within Alberta.

When I began interviewing this entire group of women, I had no idea that I would be writing a dissertation about their personal narratives. I simply wanted to glean what I could from my mother and her sisters about their collective life as girls growing up on a Ukrainian-Canadian homestead. Gradually, the weight of the R sister interviews convinced me that a dedicated study of this material would be a valuable, albeit daunting, enterprise. Once in graduate school, I turned to the K sisters in an attempt to round out the picture that the R interviews were giving me. Needless to say, the quantity of material is not balanced, for I have far more interviews on the R side of the scale, but this is a natural consequence of having started early with them and having greater access to them. There is also the variable of interview comfort (the interviewee's and the interviewer's), but this is not such an important factor as one might think. Over all, I found more comfort interviewing the K sisters, for they simply laughed more often. In retrospect, I think that my awe for the ages of Katherine and Nancy, their ability to speak of events nearly a century ago, led me to interview them repeatedly. In the case of Katherine, I may also have been swayed by the poetic quality of her narratives.

Although this dissertation seeks to find and trace threads that tie members of a family together, this does not mean that the two families are monolithic units. They are comprised of individuals who at times work in concert to create their family's subjective sense of itself. Thus the five R sisters are not identical in terms of what they can share of their personal narratives to reveal family identity, nor are the three K sisters. Among these respondents some are reticent, others talkative; some speak with great insight and wit while, others struggle to articulate their thoughts; some are connected to the spiritual aspects of ritual observance, others are not; some use humor easily, others do not. The list of differences among siblings is longer than the list of similarities: individuals have personalities and they are all different. Nevertheless, the beliefs that these diverse family members share about their particular family is a primary focus of this dissertation.

In formulating a dissertation topic, one of my criteria was to find a way to balance the interviews. Given the insight I had gained from Katherine, I chose to include only personal narratives about ritual observance from the interviews. This choice meant that sixty per cent of the narratives were disallowed from the dissertation. The disallowed material included reminisces about neighbors and school friends, descriptions of farm activity, school activity and community hall activity. There were descriptions of flora and fauna, of the weather and climate, and of the skies both day and night. There were also anecdotes drawn from dramatic moments in the past. For example, there was the time when one of the farm horses fell into the uncovered well. There were moments of high hilarity, such as the time when the youngest K children were sent bobbing down a good-sized creek, riding in pots and boilers, commandeered by a nautically obsessed, slightly older babysitter, their Uncle Harry. It is with no small regret that I imposed a ritual observance criteria on the rich body of narratives I collected.

It is important to note that I have a personal relationship with this material. I am a niece for both families. My mother, Vera, one of the R sisters, married my father, Pete, who was a brother to the K sisters. As part of the family, I am an insider, but as an academic researcher, I am an outsider. One consequence of this is the fact that some of the personal narratives that have been related to me have more information than others, and often reflect idiosyncrasies of the narrators based on their relationship (perceived and otherwise) with one or another of my parents. Two of the less-successful interviews, those of Anne R and Annie K, were, in part, a function of my not being familiar to the narrator as a niece and thus being looked upon as an academic researcher. On the R family side, I am a recipient of a lifetime of shared family stories.[13] Because my father spoke very little about his family, I have only recently become acquainted with the K family side.

The interview context evolved in somewhat different ways among the K and the R sisters. This was the result of geographical expediency combined with family associations. I interviewed the R sisters, each in her own home, alone. The R sisters, although certainly aware of one another's activities, do not maintain close ties. Among them, there are friendship clusters. On one hand Katherine and Alice are cohorts; Nancy and Anne are cohorts, but on the other hand Katherine and Nancy are not.

It was more difficult to interview the K sisters one-on-one. They maintain an active weekly connection and are very involved in each other's lives. If Annie K in Grimshaw was more comfortable having her sister Kay nearby while a rather unknown niece proceeded to interview her, then Kay and Annie were in the same room. Pauline K lives in Florida. To interview Pauline in her Florida home was out of the question for me in terms of expense and time. But when I was apprised of Pauline's visit to sister Kay in Edmonton, it seemed politic to ask for an interview and to proceed whether Kay was in the same room or not. Thus my interviews with Annie and Pauline included Kay as a sometimes-participant. However, my interviews with Kay consisted of two solo interviews and one with Pauline present. Does this skew the K sisters' interview "mood" when compared to that of the R sisters? I think not. Kay's narrative material did not change in any appreciable way from her solo interviews to her interview with Pauline present.

The dynamics with each narrator were complicated, particularly on the R family side where I was a more familiar entity. The R sisters are a competitive group of women and there was some concern among them whether I was asking each of them similar questions, which I was. The degree of warmth also varied in relation to a particular sister's relationship with my mother, some being warmer, some being cooler. Moreover, I was consistently aware of the reflexive quality inherent in my interviews. Myerhoff and Ruby compare the situation to a hall of mirrors in which "the subject changes by being observed, and we must observe our impact on him or her and the resultant impact on ourselves…" (1992: 324). This study is the world as it is being presented, but it is not to be taken at face value, which is to say that "the anthropologist and the subject of study together construct an interpretation of a cultural feature, an understanding of the interpreter, that would not have come into existence naturally" (1992: 325). Interviewing my R and K aunts, I repeatedly found myself in circumstances almost identical to those described by Myerhoff in the context of her ground-breaking ethnographic study, *Number Our Days*:

> Required by…circumstances to work…among my own people, I found myself doing a complex enterprise that involved ceaseless evaluation of the effects of membership on my conclusions….It was soon evident that I knew more than I needed to, or sometimes wanted to, about the people I was studying, that at every juncture, I was looking at my own grandmother, which was to say a variation of myself-as-her, and as I would be in the future. We even looked alike. I responded with embarrassing fullness to my subjects' uses of personal mechanisms of control and interpersonal manipulation…acknowledging over and over that indeed we were one. In time I began to realize that identification and projection were enormously rich sources of information but often painful and often misleading, requiring my constant monitoring. (Myerhoff and Ruby 1992: 340)

In the course of all of the twenty-four R and K interviews there are questions I now wish I had asked and times I wish I had kept silent. I was consistently engaged in a battle with myself to remain a dispassionate listener and researcher. On several occasions, I found myself clinging, like a hermit crab, to the list of points I had hoped to cover. And in retrospect, I wince to read some of the leading questions I proffered in an effort to control the flow of an interview.

Further context for the interviews is that of family heritage. All of the interviews, though conducted contemporaneously, focus on events (various sorts of experienced rituals) that occurred primarily while these women were children or adolescents. Nancy and Katherine R's earliest memories, at least those that surface in their narratives, date from 1913 forward. In subsequent chapters the details of R and K family heritage are broadly elaborated.

All of the subjects interviewed for this dissertation were children of the first wave of Ukrainian immigrants to Canada.[14] All of them were born on the homesteads that their parents and grandparents had created. As such, their active life experiences share, with virtually all the other Ukrainian immigrants, a common set of primary references upon which the bulk of the ritualistic material is drawn. The interviews were conducted in English. The women interviewed used English as their primary language in their youth and now speak English exclusively. They could recall only words or phrases in Ukrainian.

Methodology

This is a qualitative study. My approach to the narratives is interpretive.
The interviews with the R and K sisters were taped by means of a small portable tape recorder, usually positioned near the speaker on a kitchen table, a coffee table or the arm of a living room chair. The tape recorder was relatively unobtrusive. Interviews varied in length, length being a function of how long it took to say what the interviewee felt was necessary. There was no clear distinction between the interview time of individual R sisters as opposed to interview time of individual K sisters. Some of the women simply spoke longer than others on occasion—no one was consistently long- or short-winded—and interview length also varied from one visit to the next regarding an individual. Usually I carried 60-minute tapes with me.[15] The tape recorder automatically reversed the direction of the tape when a side was completed. Some interviews lasted as long as three tapes or three hours; some interviews were conducted within one sixty-minute period.

For each interview, I kept a list of notes and questions on a tablet of lined paper in front of me. But these notes were not extensive, for I wanted to maintain eye contact with the speaker and to follow body language as well. If my notes were to be more detailed, then they would distract me from closely following the speaker. My notes varied from speaker to speaker and were based on either specific questions I had or items I simply could not forget to introduce into my questions. My line of questioning was rather basic. Usually I tried to ask "do you remember" or "do you recall" and then to draw out the speaker with further questions. On occasion I brought photographs or maps to an interview, in the hopes that these items might assist the process. Thus, an average interview was a free-form affair during which I tried to cover certain topics, for example, the observance of ritual.

During the interviews, I made small jottings and notations, but I tried to avoid writing too much on my note tablet because I found that it distracted me as well as the speaker, and sometimes broke the flow of the monologue or the dialogue. If I thought that a term or a phrase used by the speaker might not come out clearly on the tape, then I wrote it down. Basically, I used the tape recorder to take "notes" for me so that I could document the interview later. Once the interview was completed, I either transcribed the entire interview or made a tape index, an abbreviated transcript listing the topics a speaker covered adjacent to the appropriate tape counter numbers.[16]

Unfortunately, there is a flaw in the methodology here, for taped interviews alone do not capture the richness of the K sisters' experience or what they (fail to) communicate about the K family. If I were to follow each K sister for several months using a tape recorder and a video recorder, all the while taking detailed notes to track her activity, I would be able to draw a portrait of a family in which Ukrainian-Canadian ritual observation, albeit of a more contemporary form, still carries spiritual and magical power. The K sisters do not articulate their attitude. Again and again in their narratives, they do not speak of all the activity that involved them and the K family, for example around Christmas—preparation and contents of the twelve meatless dishes, watching for the first star on Christmas Eve, reverential feeding of the livestock and other ritual activities. They take these activities for granted, because they were second-nature to family life, part of an accepted and completely absorbed rhythm of ritual observance. It was unremarkable because it was simply what one did. At present, surviving K siblings continue to practice Ukrainian-Canadian rituals, modified to fit the 21st century.[17] They have not rekindled their ritual practice in order to embrace a newly fashionable ethnic-chic Ukrainianism. They have continued with the thread unbroken. Furthermore, they are active and reverent church goers and members, a line that goes back to their parents and grandparents.

In the taped interviews, the R sisters, for their part, can articulate what their family did and how. It would appear that the R family values a certain quality of analytical observation and description. Thus, they attempt to make it clear that early on they held themselves apart from Ukrainian-Canadian ritual practice and gradually dismissed it. This is communicated in their narratives.

All this having been said, the Rs and the Ks maintain different narrative ecologies. This study in part tracks the history of the narrative tradition in both families. The K family tends to perpetuate a tradition of telling stories. They speak easily by way of illustrating a point or generating humor with an anecdote or a narrative that is related to family events. For the most part, K family members are practiced in the art of narration and storytelling. Indeed, they welcome opportunities to speak in the rhythms of telling a story; whereas, the R family as a group is less attached to story telling as a means of expression. Unless asked pointedly, the Rs do not speak in terms of narratives related to family events. Many of the narratives on the R side in this dissertation, I had never heard before, and I have been an integral part of the R family all of my life.

Initially I had no grand plan in terms of interview order. It was partially dictated by who was available and how easy it would be to travel to interview that person. I have already noted that I did seek out Katherine R first and Nancy R seemed to follow after Katherine. I did however, arrange the interviews in this dissertation in the general order in which they took place because it was easier for me to write using this sequence. In an earlier version of the dissertation, I tried to arrange the sisters' essays according to their birth order—Nancy, Katherine, Anne, Vera, Alice or Annie, Kay, Pauline — but this felt awkward and a bit artificial to me.

In this study, I have chosen to focus on the narratives of the women in the family. Though not a primary focus, gender is important in this dissertation. There were gender issues that were common to each group of women, which I will take up in the respective sections about family origins. Women are important bearers/carriers of ritual observance. The R and K women seem to hold the threads to family heritage more firmly, and so their voices are of primary interest to me. Because I am also female, it has been easier for me to identify with my female elders, my aunts. As I have stated, the R and the K women were, for the most part, forthcoming with their personal narratives and richly informed about family heritage. The men were more circumspect about talking with me.[18]

Ritual observance is the unifying topic among all of the R and K interviews. I have taken only personal narratives about ritual observance from the general interview material. I have taken all the personal narratives about ritual observance from the general interview material. I am not selectively including certain personal narratives to make our argument. One criteria I followed is to include all of the personal narratives about ritual observance in the dissertation to see what they reveal. Thus editing decisions have been made on the basis of isolating narratives about ritual observance from the interviews. When the narrator began and ended discussion about any calendaric or rite of passage ritual activity, this discreet narrative was grouped with other narratives of similar content for the purpose of comparison.

Definitions

I define terms as they come up in the context of each chapter, for example "personal narrative" and "family identity." However, some terms take on added meaning in this dissertation and seem to need clarification earlier. The most problematic term is "ritual" itself—that is, ritual in the sense of what it meant to the R family. For Nancy R and a number of her sisters, a church service is a ritual. Church services are related to the idea of religion and these two are connected with ritual observance in the minds of the R sisters. Religion, church and ritual observance all add up to "superstition" for the R sisters. "Superstition" is a negative term for them.[19] The same is not borne out by the K sisters' personal narratives.

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[1] The term "Ukrainian Canadian" is used throughout the dissertation to refer to those who left Bukovyna or Galicia in the late 19th century, their native and primary language being Ukrainian, and settled in Canada. The term applies to their ancestors still living in Canada.

[2] *Kutia* is a prepared dish consisting of boiled wheat, usually mixed with honey and crushed poppy seeds. It is served as one of twelve meatless dishes, with deep roots in 19th century Ukrainian ritual lore, on Christmas eve among Ukrainian-Canadians. *Kutia* is of significant ritual importance. Usually the first of the twelve meatless dishes to be served, *kutia* was, and still is, treated with great reverence. Symbolically it represented the hopes of a farm-based household for fruitful crops, good health for man and beast, and a future of some good fortune. Traditionally, the first spoonful of *kutia* was taken by the family patriarch and flung to the ceiling of the family's abode. If the *kutia* stuck to the ceiling and if the number of wheat-grains sticking to the ceiling were copious, then the prognosis for the family's future, for the new year, was good. Once the patriarch had offered prayers, flung the *kutia* and then tasted it, the rest of the family was served the wheat-porridge dish and the remaining eleven meatless dishes, thereafter.

[3] I use the term "ritual observance" throughout this study to denote the activity of celebrating a particular ritual. The term "ritual" is proscriptive; whereas, "ritual observance" is descriptive. I am less interested here in how a Ukrainian-Canadian ritual was, in its perfect or classical form, intended to be enacted (proscriptive). I am more interested in how and what the R family and the K family actually did to celebrate or to observe the myriad rituals that were part of their cultural heritage.

[4] By calendar ritual, I mean those ritual celebrations tied to the yearly cycle. Examples in the Ukrainian-Canadian calendar include Christmas, *Iordan* [Epiphany, Theophany, Feast of Jordan], Easter, *Zeleni Sviata* [Pentecost, Whitsuntide], and *Ivana* [Feast of St. John the Baptist].

[5] By rite of passage rituals, I mean those rituals related to life events. Examples include christening (birth), marriage, and funeral (death) rituals.

[6] An "aha!" experience for me is one in which I am startled by an insight that clarifies a thought or clarifies the meaning of my actions.

[7] I will speak at much greater length about what I mean by "family identity" in the next chapter, "The Personal Narrative and Family Identity."

[8] After the dissertation defense, I sat with Katherine and read parts of the dissertation to her. She was amazed that I had been able to capture a sense of the R family as she herself perceives it and wanted to share further narratives that were rising to the surface of her mind "for the first time in years." Katherine's daughter, Adrienne, joined us as I read the chapter in my dissertation about her mother. Adrienne undoubtedly has carried away

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other ideas from the reading. Perhaps she now sees new facets of her mother, or has a sharper view of the R family which she accepts and which she will, over the years, share with her son. Or perhaps Adrienne does not concur with the dissertation's presentation of the R family and will adjust her attitudes about the family over the next years and pass them on to her son. [During my visit with Katherine in San Francisco, we spoke about the dissertation on Thursday, June 2nd, 2005. I was on the way home to Bloomington, Indiana after the dissertation defense in Edmonton, AB which had been on May 26th.]

[9] I discuss what I consider to be the difference between the terms "personal narrative" and "family story" in Chapter II, "The Personal Narrative and Family Identity."

[10] All tapes and transcripts of the interviews from which the narratives have been drawn in this dissertation are archived at the Bohdan Medwidsky Ukrainian Folklore Archives in the Ukrainian Folklore Centre at the University of Alberta, Edmonton. Accession number 2005.001.

[11] The actual interview dates for the R sisters are as follows.
Katherine. 23 March 1994, 28 April 1994, 5 May 1994, 14 May 1994,
14 March 1997, 31 August 2000, 22 January 2003
Nancy. 2 May 1995, 5 May 1995, 11 May 1995, 26 May 1995, 25 February 2001
Vera. 25 March 1995, 25 February 2001, 17 January 2003
Alice. 21 March 1997, 25 January 2003
Anne. 13 January 2003, 14 January 2003

[12] The actual interview dates for the K sisters are as follows.
Kay. 25 February 2000, 25 July 2003, 7 February 2005
Pauline. 25 July 2003
Annie. 14 October 2002

[13] Unless otherwise noted, only the narratives themselves are source material used in this dissertation. This is true for both the R and the K sisters' narratives.

[14] The first wave of immigration to western Canada from the former crownlands of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Bukovyna and Galicia, took place from approximately1890 to approximately 1910, when hostilities leading to the First World War began to interfere with immigration (Martynowych 1991: 60-77).

[15] I treated audio cassette tapes and AA batteries like popcorn for this study.

[16] Many of the interviews I conducted before I began my studies at the University of Alberta, I transcribed (wrote out word-for-word) in their entirety. I assumed that total transcription was the normal protocol. But once among professional interviewers, my folklore mentors, I quickly learned that a tape index was quicker to produce and that salient sections of an index could be transcribed.

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[17] Alec K's Ukrainian-Canadian Christmas observation is probably the best example of ritual continuity among the K family, but one could also cite the preparation and blessing of *paska* (Easter) baskets (Betty, Hazel, Alec and Jim K), the quietly emotional observance of *provody*, and funeral rituals that include a dinner 40 days after the passing of the deceased (Hazel) and another at the one-year anniversary of death (Hazel and Betty).

[18] Three of the R brothers (Alex, Sam and Bill) have written what they consider to be their autobiographies, yet none of the R sisters—or the K sisters—wrote autobiographies. These autobiographies are less about the experience of the R family and its life, and particularly its spiritual life, and more about the men's personal histories, that tend to show a desire to have a place in history. The three R brother autobiographies have been used as ancillary material for this study.

[19] Folklore scholar Jan Harold Brunvand writes at some length about attitudes toward folk beliefs. He notes that "superstitions are often thought of as naïve popular beliefs, usually concerning chance, magic, or the supernatural, that are logically or scientifically untenable. Hence, the alternate term 'folk belief' is often employed, carrying with it the equally negative connotations of unsophistication and ignorance that the word 'folk' has in popular usage" (1968: 371).

The Personal Narrative and Family Identity

No more elegant tool exists to describe the human condition than the personal narrative.
(Shostak 1989: 239)

This dissertation explores how the personal narratives of two groups of second-generation women from two families of Ukrainian-Canadian immigrants[1] that settled in east central Alberta, can be used as a means of revealing aspects of family identity. By "family identity" I mean the family's subjective and collective sense of its character and of its belief system.[2] The personal narratives, for the most part, describe ritual observance in the two families. We propose that these personal narratives are part of each family's narrative ecology. They communicate each family's shared beliefs about itself and articulate family identity. Before we turn to a discussion of family identity or ritual observance, though, my first task here is to examine and identify what constitutes a personal narrative.

The literature concerning the usage of personal narrative[3] and the analysis of narrative is vast. In scope, it is a multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary field. When a scholar speaks of personal narrative, she can be situated in the field of literature, history, anthropology, folklore, linguistics, psychology, sociology, sociolinguistics, law, medicine, nursing, psychiatry, social work, or education (Riessman 1993: 5-6). The task here is to find, in this sizeable literature, not only a definition of personal narrative itself, but a context for it that is pertinent to this study.

From the field of folklore, Sandra D. Stahl defines personal narrative thusly: "the personal narrative is a first-person narrative account of a secular personal experience; its style is conversational and its plot content non-traditional" (Stahl 1975:184). And in a later study, she considers the personal narrative to be "a prose narrative relating a personal experience: it is usually told in the first person, and its content is nontraditional…in the context of established folklore genres" (Stahl 1989: 12).[4] Interestingly, in the fourteen years between her two definitions, Stahl has dropped the notion of "plot" from her definition. Stahl successfully maintains that the personal narrative "as process or as an item…is demonstrably folklore and is thus at least part of 'the proper study of folklorists'" (Stahl 1975: 186). Her conclusion has long ago become part of accepted folklore theory.

Stahl speaks at some length of the descriptive characteristics of the personal narrative. Personal narrative content "is always an experience, one in which the teller either participated or served as an involved witness" (Stahl 1975:165). For her, personal narrative themes are comprised of certain basic types: the use of humor, an amusing human foible related sympathetically, a 'human situation' theme in which fate plays a role, a theme in which disgust or indignation is registered on the part of the teller, or a theme of heroism or 'one-upmanship' (Stahl 1975: 165-67). *Dramatis personae* consist of the narrator as main character or as witness (Stahl 1975: 169).

According to Stahl, the functions of the personal narrative incorporate amusement and performance (1975: 169-70). The performance of a personal narrative places the narrator in the role of teacher, monitor or entertainer (or a combination of the three) (1975: 170). Additionally, Stahl notes that "personal narratives can serve both an 'active' and 'passive' function," which is to say that they can instruct actively—as in "a cautionary tale"— or they can "reflect passively on a past situation" (1975: 170). Finally, the personal narrative carries "a personal function," which Stahl describes as having two aspects: "one aspect is the varying level of self-aggrandizement of the teller" (1975: 171) and "the personal narrative simply because of its personal content serves to endear the teller to his audience" (1975: 172). And here, Stahl quotes scholar Richard Bauman who adds that, in the personal narrative, narrators "engage in personal and social identity-building" (1975: 172). It is this last point which I would like to reflect on for a moment.

Stahl's exhaustive analysis of the personal narrative places this prose narrative squarely in the field of folklore. But Stahl does not really address the role of personal narrative in identity-building, for it is tangential to her study. Stahl's ultimate and successful goal is to show that the personal narrative is a folklore genre. However, I think that Stahl's definition of personal narrative leans towards the concept of "story." For her, a personal narrative usually has a plot. Stahl does note that the "family story" is a genre "closely related to the personal narrative" (Stahl 1975; 54). She considers the family story to be akin to a "family saga," that is, and here Stahl uses the language of folklorist Mody C. Boatright, the term family story denotes "a lore that tends to cluster around families…which is preserved and modified by oral transmission and which is believed to be true" (Stahl 1975: 54). For Stahl, family stories "may often arise in the midst of an exchange of personal narratives, and we may conjecture that most family stories started as someone's personal narrative and spread within the family in a kind of mini-legend-building process" (1975: 55). Stahl infers here that a family story is composed of personal narratives.

Stahl considers that family stories "make up a part of each family's history, but to a certain extent, the stories themselves are regarded as functional in areas other than simply establishing family identity" (1975: 57). In other words, some family stories can be regarded as folklore—for example, when someone in the family tells a tall tale—because the story has been "improved upon" (1975: 56). Stahl concludes saying that "we might think of the family stories as personal narratives representing the family as a unit" (1975: 57). Thus, although she considers the family story to be a genre separate from the personal narrative, Stahl thinks of the family story as personal narrative "representing the family as a unit." Furthermore, she relates the family story to family identity.

The matter of pinning down the differences—such as they can be identified—between the personal narrative and the family story is of some import to my study. Stahl clouds the water[5] by stating that the family story is "another genre closely related to the personal narrative" (1975: 54) and then offers that "we might think of the family stories as personal narratives representing the family as a unit."

Perhaps a clearer reckoning of the term "family story" comes from an essay titled "Generativity and the Narrative Ecology of Family Life," in which scholar Dan P. McAdams notes that the term "family stories" seems to stand for two somewhat different kinds of phenomena (McAdams 2004: 247). There are family stories that are told *by* family members in the presence of other family members (2004: 247). Then there are family stories that are told by family members *about* family, but "the audiences for these stories may or may not be other family members" (2004: 247). It would seem that Stahl is talking of the first of these two "phenomena" when she speaks of family stories. Nevertheless, she relates the family story to family personality, family identity and personal narrative.

In an overview of the methods of narrative analysis, Catherine Riessman considers the personal narrative to be "first-person accounts by respondents of their experience" (Riessman 1993: 1). She notes that although the precise definition of personal narrative continues to be debated, "it refers to talk organized around consequential events. A teller in a conversation takes a listener into a past time or 'world' and recapitulates what happened then to make a point, often a moral one" (Reissman 1993: 3). I would agree with Reissman, that in a personal narrative, the teller may attempt to make a point, but I disagree that the point is "often a moral one." I consider the distinction between a personal narrative and a story to be, in part, that the "story" has a plot and strives to make a moral point, but that this does not always hold true for the personal narrative.

Suffice it to say that when I refer to a personal narrative in this study, I think of a personal narrative as "a fragmentary episode of experience" (Rosenwald & Ochberg 1992: 5). Thus, a personal narrative is not always as complete as a story with a plot, nor is it a family story or family narrative—whether told *by* or *about* the family. For me, a story is context specific and almost always overtly has a point to make or a moral to draw, whereas a personal narrative reflects meaning and how that meaning was formed. But the meaning or the message of a personal narrative is often hidden, covert. A personal narrative is a shorter, less encyclopedic form, than a personal story, a life story or a personal life history. This fragment can have a plot or it can be without out a plot, but it does and must communicate something about experience: indeed, the personal narrative "is a way of organizing experience" (Rosenwald & Ochberg 1992: 8). Personal narratives indicate and express, but they do not necessarily embody. Furthermore, personal narratives "contribute to the formation of identity" (Rosenwald & Ochberg 1992: 8). The personal narratives we tell about and to ourselves gradually assist us in becoming who we are.

Riessman states that in qualitative interviews, much of the talk is not narrative, but instead question-and-answer exchanges and other forms of discourse (Reissman 1993: 3).[6] I maintain that the "other forms of discourse" imbedded in my interview material are personal narratives. The point Riessman makes is an important one though, for although the raw material for this dissertation is comprised of qualitative interviews, discussion and analysis rest upon personal narratives that have been drawn from the interviews.

Stahl further qualifies the personal narrative in the context of folklore studies, as a narrative in which "attitudes, values, prejudices [and], tastes" are expressed (Stahl 1989: 19). For Stahl, "the advantage of the personal narrative is that the storyteller chooses the specific situation that aptly expresses a covertly held value" (Stahl 1989: 19). In other words, when a narrator describes a personal experience, he or she identifies a specific situation considered to highlight his or her own actions, values or insights. Or stated another way, the act of creating a personal narrative [behavior] is a way of talking about identity [values], both individual identity and family identity. Rosenwald and Ochberg state this point eloquently: "The stories [personal narratives] people tell about themselves are interesting not only for the events and characters they describe but also for something in the construction of the stories themselves. How individuals recount their histories—what they emphasize and omit, their stance as protagonists or victims, the relationship the story establishes between teller and audience—all shape what individuals can claim of their own lives. *Personal stories are not merely a way of telling someone (or oneself) about one's life; they are the means by which identities may be fashioned*" [my italics] (Rosenwald & Ochberg 1992: 1).

The personal narratives that comprise the material for this dissertation cast light on family identity.[7] McAdams speaks to this point. For him, "Every family has its own unique narrative ecology. Stories told in and about families function in a wide variety of ways. They provide entertainment; they offer opportunities for self-expression; they promote belief systems and exemplify character traits that members of the family value; they help to shape individual and family identity" (McAdams 1992: 252). McAdams's felicitous term "a family's narrative ecology" is apt and expressive of how personal narratives about family can function to construct a sense of family identity. Fiese and Pratt note that "there is an essential interpretive component of what it means to be a member of a family that may be revealed in the stories [personal narratives] themselves. These meanings may be relatively unique to a particular field" (Fiese & Pratt 1992: 412).

How does one study or analyze a personal narrative? There is no single way. The plethora of approaches is sufficiently overwhelming that, thankfully, one scholar, albeit a scholar from the behavioral sciences, Elliot G. Mishler,[8] sought to frame the various analytical approaches in a typology.[9] Mishler deals with narrative in general, but I think that Mishler's typology rings true for the study of personal narrative in the context here. He states that his "proposed typology....is addressed primarily to issues of central concern to researchers in the human sciences who focus on the production and functions of narratives in social contexts...and on the analytic use of narrative modes of interpretation in historical and scientific accounts" (Mishler 1995: 89).

In her study of the research methods of narrative analysis, Riessman notes that the purpose of narrative analysis is to see how narrators "impose order on the flow of experience to make sense of events and actions in their lives" (1993: 2). In other words, the point of narrative analysis is simply "why was the story told *that* way?" (Riessman 1993: 2). The question is deceptively straightforward.

Returning to Mishler, "researchers have different answers for each of many questions: What *is* a narrative? Does it have a distinctive structure? Are there different genres of narrative? When are stories [personal narratives] told and for what purposes? Who has the right to tell them? What are their effects—cultural, psychological, social?" (Mishler 1995: 88). For Mishler, the manner in which scholars answer these questions, regarding narratives, falls into three general categories of analysis— reference, structure, and function (1995: 89). In Mishler's first category, the focus is "on reference as a problem of representation; specifically, the correspondence between the temporal sequence of actual events and their order of presentation in the text or discourse" (1995: 90). The second category "correspond[s] with linguistic and narrative strategies through which different types and genres of stories are organized; that is, how they achieve structure and coherence" (1995: 89). In the third category, the focus is on "cultural, social, and psychological contexts and functions of stories" (Mishler 1995: 89).

Without recasting Mishler's entire typology, I would like to acknowledge that it is narrative function, the function of the personal narrative, that is, in part, the subject of this dissertation. Questions of definition, structure, genre, time or authority are tangential to this particular inquiry. Here, my focus is on the purpose(s) and resulting effects of the personal narrative.

What purpose does a narrative fulfill and what function does it serve? According to Mishler, "a number of psychologists view the construction of a personal narrative as central to the development of a sense of one's self, of an identity" (Mishler 1995: 108). For example, D.E. Polkinghorne argues that "narrative is a scheme by means of which human beings give meaning to their experience of temporality and personal actions" (1988: 11). And B. J. Cohler has characterized personal narratives as "the most internally consistent interpretation of presently understood past, experienced present, and anticipated future" (1988: 207).

This having been said, a brief digression is in order. We are taking our direction from the theoretical material coming from the arguments of Rosenwald and Ochberg. There is a reason for this. We do not see the interpretive self-consciousness, the questioning of textual objectivism, that has come to characterize the study of narrative, [eg. who "authored" the text] as germane to the pursuit of our argument. The hypothesis here is that personal narratives are a means of observing how aspects of family identity are expressed and transmitted. It serves little purpose to be engaged in discussion over the very foundations of existence. This study is not a literary analysis of (suspect) texts; it is a study of identity and meaning.

I take the position of Rosenwald and Ochberg, who explain with clarity, developments in the study of narrative [personal narratives, life stories] in the past thirty years. I quote them at some length, not only because I concur with their point of view, but because the depth of their understanding of narrative issues helps to clarify the direction of this dissertation. According to Rosenwald and Ochberg there has been a turn away from considering "the informant's 'own story'" as just that (1992: 2). They explain that in an earlier era of research and scholarship, narratives (life stories, personal histories) "...were intended to be read as objective descriptions, different only in format from the descriptions of social science. In the past twenty years, however, a new conception of personal report has entered the scene. As a result, personal accounts are now read with an eye not just to the scenes they describe but to the process, product, and consequences of reportage itself" (1992: 2). Rosenwald and Ochberg call this the "interpretive turn" in social science (1992: 2).[10]

Mishler, for example, gives a sense of "the hermeneutic self-consciousness" (Rosenwald & Ochberg 1992: 3) now at the fore in the humanities and the social sciences, when he writes of the challenges in interpreting and analyzing a narrative:

> Both respondents and I as the analyst [interviewer] are engaged in acts of reconstruction. They select some events to report and omit others, project an image of themselves as certain kinds of persons, try to answer my questions, and present a reasonably sensible and meaningful life story. All the factors of memory, motive, and context influence what they include in their accounts, which are necessarily and irremediably selective and incomplete..... (Mishler 1995: 96)

In Mishler's view and that of many researchers and scholars, a personal narrative, or a "life story," does not mirror a world "out there." Instead, as Riessman observes, personal narratives or informants' stories are "constructed, creatively authored, rhetorical, replete with assumptions, and interpretive" (1993: 5). This view of the narrative has come to replace the earlier view that an informant's story was a realistic description of events. For example, in many of the now considered "classic" ethnographies that incorporate first-person accounts, the assumption is that the ethnographies were different only in format from other scientific descriptions.[11] Riessman notes that "critics of the realist assumptions of positivism challenge these views of language and knowing....Skeptical about a correspondence theory of truth, language is understood as deeply constitutive of reality, not simply a technical device for establishing meaning" (1993: 4). Clifford and Marcus propose that all texts stand upon shifting ground, insofar as the narrators "do not hold still for their portraits" (Clifford 1986: 10). In the social sciences and in the humanities, the idea of textual objectivism has been seriously questioned by a variety of approaches: among them, semiotics, hermeneutics, conversational and discourse analysis, deconstructivism, feminism, and reader-response theory. Rosenwald and Ochberg size up the situation in narrative studies succinctly: "There is no binding theory of narrative" (1992: 16).

I have noted that the study of narrative, especially narrative analysis, is characterized by an emphasis on interpretation. Riessman concurs. For her, "narrative analysis—and there is no *one* method here—has to do with 'how protagonists interpret things' (Bruner 1990: 51), and we can go about systematically interpreting their interpretations. Because the approach gives prominence to human agency and imagination, it is well suited to studies of subjectivity and identity" (Riessman 1993: 5). "We now listen [to life narratives (personal narratives)] with a different style of attention. It is no longer plausible to regard the events informants describe as intelligible without further inquiry into the background assumptions of the speakers and their audiences' (Rosenwald & Ochberg 1992: 3).

In the study of narrative, Rosenwald and Ochberg do not propose to accept personal narratives uncritically. They note that "our critical posture receives its impetus from presuppositions of conflict—between the individual and society, between consciousness and repression, between desire and adaptation. Unfortunately the decline of realism and the rise of narrative theory seem to lend themselves to the premature dissolution of this model of conflict" (1992: 6). They go on to say that "Today theorists commonly discuss narrative as productive of effects rather than as portraying an objective or even a private psychic state of affairs. These post-realist assumptions give rise to conceptual difficulties" (Rosenwald & Ochberg 1992: 266).

In fact, because the difficulties "posed by the recent social-constructionist agenda, in particular, regarding the relation of the narrative subject to his or her stories and to the situation in which these are produced" (1992: 266) are multifaceted, and integral to the position taken with regard to them by this dissertation, they are presented here in detail:

> (1) Life stories (personal narratives) draw a connection between the events of yesterday and today; the subjective conviction of autobiographic coherence is intrinsic to a sense of identity. The modern narrative perspective, however, suggests that this coherence is an illusion—a tactical maneuver. But is the self-historicizing subject a mere opportunist who casually reinvents the past to serve the needs of the present? If so, then it becomes nearly impossible to think about the importance of memories…of attempts to master the past in new self-liberating editions. (1992: 6)
>
> (2) Another problem concerns the relation between the individual and society. Current narrative theory sets forth that the culture 'speaks itself' through each individual's story. The difficulty with this view is that it dissolves the tension between individual desire and social adaptation. The silences, truncations, and confusions in stories as well as the occasional outbreaks of action contradicting an individual's 'official' narrative, point out to us—and to the narrator, what else might be said and sought. (1992: 7)
>
> (3) The final problem concerns the relation between stories and practices. The empiricist holds that stories tell us about behavior and that behavior is what matters. Critical-interpretive theory points out that human action, individual or collective, is constituted by discourse and unintelligible apart from its interpretation. At its limit, this line of reasoning can be taken to support the notion that social life counts for nothing outside of discourse. But life is not merely talk: changes in narrative are significant to the extent that they stir up changes in how we live. (Rosenwald & Ochberg 1992: 7)

At this point, it should be obvious that modern skepticism about the objectivity of narratives seems to render the whole interpretive enterprise suspect. Why take an interest in life stories [personal narratives] if their truth cannot be warranted? Rosenwald and Ochberg address the problem of objectivity and the "truth" of a personal narrative or a life story:

> The objection is well taken if "truth" in the realist sense is the target. But to the investigator of psychological or cultural representation, the object of study is not the "true" event, as it might have been recorded by some panel of disinterested observers, but the construction of that event within a personal and social history. In short, what interests us most is precisely what the realist finds most discomfiting—the factitiousness of the tale. In the form a particular narrator gives to a history we read the more or less abiding concerns and constraints of the individual and his or her community. (Rosenwald & Ochberg 1992: 3-4)

They conclude their appraisal of current narrative theory noting that in personal narratives (life stories) "coherence derives from the tacit assumptions of plausibility that shape the way each story maker weaves the fragmentary episodes of experience into a history" (1992:5). It is "the formative effects of narratives" that "give direction to lives" (1992: 6).

Narratives (personal narratives) contribute to identity in a number of ways. They are "a way of organizing experience" (Rosenwald & Ochberg 1992: 8). In other words, "in telling their stories individuals make claims about the coherence of their lives" (1992: 9). Another manner in which narratives contribute to identity "concerns the relationship between the storyteller and the audience. The sense one has of being a 'self' is partly one's sense of who one is in relation to others....As the telling of the tale turns the listener into the audience required by the teller, the storyteller's identity is reaffirmed or even altered" (Rosenwald & Ochberg 1992: 9).

But with regard to plausibility, and this issue is related to the creation of family identity as well, "the solitary narrator does not have carte blanche to create coherence in any fashion whatsoever....Because the stories we tell of our lives invariably touch upon the lives of those who matter to us, our self-accounts must be coordinated with the accounts others give of us and of themselves....But even in the differences a harmony must be audible; the ensemble of voices must add up to a workable whole" (Rosenwald & Ochberg 1992: 9).

Rosenwald and Ochberg agree that "social constructionists have dealt a powerful blow to the common-sense view that life stories (personal narratives) are created by the mere exercise of competent introspection and forthright communication" (1992: 270). At the same time, they note: "What keeps the narratives from being free fictions is not that they represent anything in particular but that they 'summarize and justify' the work from which they arose and our comprehension of the obstacles that had to be surmounted in the construction of these narratives" (1992: 286).

Thus, ultimately Rosenwald and Ochberg see a narrative (life story, personal narrative) as essential to the creation of identity and meaning, regardless of the arguments around their objectivity:

> One need not assume that narrators represent their lives accurately or that this is even possible. It is enough to note that they believe they are doing so. This belief is at the base of their struggles to tell their stories correctly....No narrator is indifferent to his or her account; narratives play a role in the life they recount—if only by the dissatisfaction they cause the speaker and the stimulus they provide for the redirection of life and life story. In this sense, they are both about the life and part of it. This double relevance gives them their motivational and cognitive power to transform lives—their formative potential. (1992: 271)

Personal narratives communicate identity. In this sense, personal narratives related to family experience arrive at some point as revelations of being. These, in and of themselves, belong to folklore because they inform underlying meaning—meaning that is not always visible in other aspects of the observed situation, be it a ritual, such as a rite of passage, or a simple story told after dinner, that reveals root aspects of family identity.

By "family identity" I mean "the family's subjective sense of its own continuity over time, its present situation and its character" (Bennett, Wolin & McAvity 1988: 212). Characterized by subjectivity, family identity is "a group psychological phenomenon, which has as its foundation a shared system of beliefs" (Bennett, Wolin & McAvity 1988: 212).[12] Shared belief systems in families can be encountered in a number of ways, for example, as family themes (Handel 1967), family rules (Herrick 1974), family myths (Ferreira 1966) and family constructs (Reiss 1971).[13] In each case, shared assumptions help the family and its individual members make sense of the world.

Researchers who study issues of family identity note that family identity is influenced by the family's beliefs and recollections about its heritage. For Bennett, Wolin and McAvity, "rituals and myths[14] both represent and perpetuate family identity over time" (1988: 211). They maintain that "an elusive historical aspect shapes family identity and the extent to which the family understands its present condition as part of a continuum over time. For most families, the past motivates the family to preserve its identity from one generation to the next" (Bennett, Wolin & McAvity 1988: 214).

For Fiese and Sameroff, "families have beliefs that represent the way they construct the social world and are reflected in the narrative content and *style* of the interview" [my italics] (Fiese, Sameroff, et al. 1999:14). It is an interesting point to focus for a moment on the "style of the interview," which is essentially the interaction that takes place between the narrator (family member) and the interviewer. David Reiss, Fiese and Sameroff note that the ways in which families share information with an outsider is telling.[15] In other words, "...patterns of support and validation, information exchange, and collaboration are reflected in narratives" (1999: 14). According to Fiese and Sameroff, in Reiss's study, "Reiss identified different family groups that differed in regard to the paradigms that they held about themselves and the social world. At the crux of the paradigm typology were the dimensions of mastery of relationships and trust in the outside social world" 1999: 14).[16] Ultimately, Reiss showed that a family's working model of their family relationships and the social world incorporated "the notion that families hold beliefs about relationships and develop rules of interaction to conform to these beliefs. In this regard, the interaction itself is seen as an indicator of family belief systems" (1999: 14). Thus from a narrative perspective, a family belief system "may be evaluated indirectly by the ways in which the family interacts with the interviewer" (1999: 15). In this sense, we can include observations about the "style" of the interview as also informing the expression of family identity.

Elizabeth Stone, who writes about "how family stories shape us" (Stone 1988: 34), notes that "just as every individual has a sense of his or her own identity, so every family has a sense of its own identity" (1988: 34). She posits that family identity is communicated through family definition stories that express a belief about the family, "although to an outsider, the belief may not be entirely substantiated by the family's facts" (Stone 1988: 34). Stone makes four general points about the content of a family definition, that is, what a family believes its identity to be. First, she says, the family's self-concept will usually include "a number of attributes," such as intelligence, diligence to work, or artistic inclination (Stone 1988: 35). Second, "the family identity corresponds to the sense of generic specialness that most of us privately believe ourselves to have, even if we know better. Thus the family definition is in some way an *ideal*, whether obvious or covert, that the family as a group has for itself" (Stone 1988: 35). Third, included in the family's self-concept is the belief, whether overt or covert, of what the family "*ought* to be like" (Stone 1988: 35). And fourth, the nature of the family's self-concept and narratives "used to buttress it give clues as to the family's organization and its power center. It's customary for the standard-bearer to be a member of the most senior generation....The implied fantasy is that this elder is the founder of the tribe and the creator of its ethos, rather than just a member of the generational rank and file....The elder's attributes, real or imagined, now become the family's" (Stone 1988: 35-36).

If the family's systematized beliefs about itself exert a key influence on family identity, just as importantly, "rituals enact the family identity" (Bennett, Wolin & McAvity 1988: 215). That is to say, "as a symbolic form of communication repeated in a stereotypic fashion, rituals provide meaning and satisfaction to participants" (1988: 215). Rituals have characteristics that set them apart from other activity. They are bounded, in that the family conducts them at certain times and places. They follow a sequence that entails a period of preparation and defined beginnings and endings. Rituals are compelling. They are symbolic.

Rituals are essentially the active, behavioral component that helps to perpetuate family identity among family members. Bennett, Wolin and McAvity maintain that

> Because ritual behavior itself is patterned, ordered, and predictable, it has a pervasive power to organize the family. And though there are some exceptions, rituals involve all members of the family, who must coordinate their individual activities in order for the ritual to be realized....rituals therefore demand

> cooperation in planning and in implementation. Through repetition of the familiar, they reinforce and sustain the particular attitudes or assumptions on which they are built (1988: 217).

Personal narratives that incorporate family material—family themes, family rules, family myths—circulated by the family among the family, transmit family identity as well. Stone maintains that "a family has a shared sense of what its stories mean, or at the very least, are supposed to mean. That collective understanding is exactly what allows these stories to serve purposes other than entertainment" (Stone 1988: 10). Bennett, Wolin and McAvity argue that ritual and family myth are the key transmitters of family identity; they state that "whereas ritual transmits family identity via behavior, [family] myth conveys it in narrative form" (1988: 218). I would add that because family myths are communicated by family members through their personal narratives, these narratives do transmit family identity. Because a personal narrative may incorporate family myths, the personal narrative covertly transmits family identity. Thus, ritual and narrative convey family identity and are mutually reinforcing: "Their[17] function is essentially the same: to inform or remind all family members who they are, what they are to believe, and how they are to behave, and to promote the continuity of family identity from one generation to another" (Bennett, Wolin & McAvity 1988: 218).

In summarizing their "family identity concept," Bennett, Wolin and McAvity reiterate that "the shared beliefs of a family are carried and transmitted by its rituals and myths" (1988: 230). I maintain that a family's shared beliefs, key in constructing a family identity concept, are carried and communicated by its rituals and its personal narratives, which incorporate family myths. They provide cohesiveness and a sense of belonging. To continue their summation, Bennett, Wolin and McAvity add that "These family-level beliefs encompass more conspicuous aspects, such as ethnicity, religiosity, and work ethic, as well as more subtle components of the family's gestalt. They take into account the family legacy from prior generations and represent the family's sense of its current place in the world" (1988: 230). Thus, shared family beliefs—the implicit assumptions about roles, relationships and values that govern interaction in families, transmitted and communicated by its rituals and its narratives, in part, comprise family identity.

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A brief summation of terms noted in this chapter and used in this study:

Family—a network of individuals related by kinship and including two or more generations. (Bertaux & Thompson 1993:2)

Family identity—the family's subjective sense of its own continuity over time, its present situation and its character; a group psychological phenomenon, which has as its foundation a shared system of beliefs. (Bennett, Wolin & McAvity 1988: 212)

Personal narrative—a first-person account of a fragmentary episode of experience which may or may not have a plot.

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[1] I refer to "family" here as a network of individuals related by kinship and including two or more generations. (Bertaux & Thompson 1993: 2)

[2] The concept "family identity" will be discussed more fully later in the essay here.

[3]The term "personal narrative" is often used interchangeably with the term "story." The two terms are not necessarily equal. We will discuss this further in the dissertation. Indeed, there are a plethora of terms that are confused with the idea of a personal narrative: personal story, family story, family narrative, life story, life narrative, personal life story, informant's story, personal reminiscing, personal account, recollection, plot of the storyteller, personal mythology—are among the terms I have found.

[4] When Stahl refers to the content of a personal narrative as "nontraditional," she means that its content is not that of a ballad, a fairy tale, a fable, a proverb, a joke, and so forth, generally classified by folklore scholars as "traditional" forms of folklore.

[5] Clifford Geertz calls this "genre blurring" (1983: 19).

[6] In the many qualitative interviews that form the basis of this dissertation, I have attempted to select what can be considered "personal narratives" from straightforward question-and-answer exchanges. I realize that this involves subjectivity on my part. I maintain that a personal narrative is a discrete unit—in this case, on the topic of ritual observance—within the loosely flowing interview, a unit with a beginning, middle and ending, but not necessarily a plot, detachable from the surrounding discourse. For example, when Katherine R speaks of the death of her uncle Gus or the marriage of her elder sister, she uses the sequence of a beginning, middle and end to narrate these consequential events in her life. They are nevertheless fragmentary episodes.

[7] As imaginative reconstructions of what was and narrated anticipations of what is to come, life stories [personal narratives] are much more than fact-based chronicles, as well, and somewhat less. They are somewhat less, because retrospective reports are not synonymous with either objective reality or lived experience and thus cannot be fully trusted to get all the facts 'right.' And they are much more, in that individuals choose what to remember and how to tell it in ways that serve a variety of psychological functions, revealing insights into the working of identity (McAdams & Diamond, et al. 1997: 689).

[8] Elliot G. Mishler is a professor in the Department of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. His typology appears in the *Journal of Narrative and Life History*.

[9] Models of Narrative Analysis: A Typology
Reference and temporal order: The "telling" and the "told"
    Recapitulating the told in the telling
    Reconstructing the told from the telling

Imposing a told on the telling
Making a telling from the told
Textual coherence and structure: Narrative strategies
Textual poetics: Figuration, tropes, and style
Discourse linguistics: Oral narratives
Narrative functions: Contexts and consequences
Narrativization of experience: Cognition, memory, self
Narrative and culture: Myths, rituals, performance
Storytelling in interactional and institutional contexts
The politics of narrative: Power, conflict, and resistance

The preceding is Mishler's "Model of Narrative Analysis, Table 1." (Mishler 1995: 90)

[10] Rosenwald and Ochberg attribute this "interpretive turn" in the social sciences to a number of factors. "First is the loss of faith in the empiricist program…the theory-free observation base is no longer a credible supposition. Interpretation enters every moment of scientific inquiry…and this undermines the older logic linking theory and hypothesis testing…" (1992: 2-3). "A second impetus to the study of narrative originates in the humanities, where a new hermeneutic self-consciousness has transformed theories of criticism and history (Gadamer, 1989; White, 1978). It is no longer plausible to present the scholar as servant of what he or she studies. Rather, the scholar is its maker and characteristically its partisan maker" (1992: 3). "The third source of the current interest in narrative accounts stems… from the recent struggle for the rights of the disenfranchised. The call for recognition of women, minorities, and Third World cultures has commonly taken the form of personal accounts of suffering and redemption. The women's movement, in particular, has called attention not only to objective measures of oppression…but also to the pervasive misapprehension of women's tacit worldview by androcentric theory" (Belenky 1986; Gilligan 1982).

[11] In his illuminating discussion, *Tales of the Field: On Writing Ethnography*, of various styles and theoretical positions in the writing of ethnography, John Van Maanen refers to a number of classic "realist studies." Among these are *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922) by B. Malinowski, *The Nuer* (1940) by E.E. Evans-Pritchard, *We, The Tikopia* (1936) by R. Firth, and *Political Systems of Highland Burma* (1954) by E.R. Leach (Van Maanen 1988: 54). Van Maanen discusses the conventions of the "classic" realist ethnographic studies at length in his chapter entitled "Realist Tales," pages 42-72 in *Tales of the Field: On Writing Ethnography*.

[12] According to Bennett, Wolin and McAvity, "shared belief systems are the implicit assumptions about roles, relationships, and values that govern interaction in families and other groups" (1988: 212).

[13] According to Bennett, Wolin and McAvity, who have paraphrased the material from its original, a "family theme" is a pattern of feelings, motives, fantasies and conventionalized understandings which organizes the family's view of reality. "Family

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rules" are binding directives concerning the ways in which family members should relate to one another and to the outside world." "Family myth" refers to "a number of well-systematized beliefs, shared by all family members, about their mutual roles in the family and the nature of their relationship. And the "family construct" is a paradigm—a system of shared assumptions created by each family member to make sense of the world and coordinate the actions of the member (1988: 212-213).

[14] By "family myth" Bennett, Wolin & McAvity use Antonio Ferreira's definition: "a number of well-systematized beliefs shared by all family members, about their mutual roles in the family and the nature of their relationship" (Ferreira 1966: 86). They also note that the family draws upon its factual history and its folktales to create its myths. These myths are a mixture of fact and fantasy, that incorporate key events, people and themes in the family's history (Bennett, Wolin & McAvity 1988: 217).

In her study of family stories, Elizabeth Stone suggests that family clinicians consider "family myths" and "family stories" to be the same. Stone says that "among family therapists, who examine the family not as a collection of individuals but as a dynamic system, family stories are getting more notice. Clinicians don't call them family stories—they call them "myths" more often—and by dint of who comes their way, they most often find them notable for their pathological qualities. But family therapists are also aware how profoundly these swarms of narratives can affect what we see and therefore how we live" (Stone 1988:9).

[15] Fiese and Sameroff refer to Reiss's 1981 study entitled *The Family's Construction of Reality*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

[16] Reiss's research revealed that "For some families there was an excitement in tackling new problems, challenges were met with enthusiasm, and the outside social world was embraced. For other families, however, relationships were seen as confusing, with few guidelines or rules for mastery. The outside social world may be seen as either dangerous or threatening or a place that did not warrant the family's attention" (Fiese, Sameroff, et al. 1999: 14).

[17] The "their" in this quotation refers to rituals and *family myths*, not to rituals and narratives. Thus, I have quoted Bennett *et al* slightly out of context. Nevertheless, I maintain that because personal narrative may incorporate family myth, it too is a transmitter of family identity. Bennett *et al* essentially concur when they claim that "Whereas ritual transmits family identity via behavior, myth conveys it in narrative form" (1988: 218).

Ritual

Collective ritual experience teaches those who participate who they are.
(De Vos & Romanucci-Ross 1982: 365)

Rituals enact human experience. Katherine R, for example, chose to frame her recollections of R family life in personal narratives that were grounded, for one reason or another, in rituals—either rite of passage rituals[1] or Ukrainian-Canadian calendar rituals[2]. Using personal narratives about ritual observance as a way to talk about the family, Katherine spoke through her recollections of marriages, deaths and births, as well as Christmas, *Iordan*, Easter or *Zeleni Sviata*, as though they were specific windows to the past. It would seem that her attention to ritual events—rite of passage rituals and calendar rituals— rested upon the fact that for her, they were memorable; they carried meaning that remained true over time. What Katherine revealed in her recollection process was the grounding impact of ritual on her young life growing up in a Ukrainian-Canadian homesteading family.

In a sense Katherine embodies the relationship between ritual and personal narrative. In order to return to past events, Katherine used the memory-route of ritual observation, how her family observed rituals, to evoke heritage. According to Myerhoff, "because ritual works through the senses, bypassing the critical, conscious mind, it allows one to return to earlier states of being. The past comes back, along with the ritual movements, practices, tastes, smells, and sounds, bringing along unaltered fragments from other times....Conceivably, any kind of ritual has the capacity to retrieve a fragment of past life" (1978: 200). And further to the point:

> In our world of plural cultures, the first domestic nurturant experiences are often associated with ethnic origins, bound up with first foods, touch, language, song, folkways, and the like, carried and connoted by rituals and symbols learned in that original context. Ethnic ritual and symbol are often redolent with the earliest, most profoundly emotional associations, and it is often these which are the means for carrying one back to earlier times and selves (Myerhoff 1978: 200).

Katherine is not immersed in the Proustian experience of retrieving memory by virtue of a contemporary experience that prompts via the memory to relive the past; she remembers ritual and thus retrieves memory in her series of personal narratives.

I have posited in the preceding section the concept that family identity is represented and perpetuated by ritual observance. In this assertion, I concur with Bennett, Wolin and McAvity, who argue that "rituals enact the family identity" (1988: 215). But, given this, one must hasten to ask: What is a ritual and how does it represent and perpetuate family identity? More specifically, in the case of this dissertation, what rituals did the R family and the K family embrace—or release or only partially observe—and what might be concluded about this behavior in terms of what either the embrace or release says about family identity? These are the questions we will address in this chapter.

Barbara Myerhoff has provided us with what she calls "a working definition of ritual." This is perhaps a wise designation, for any definition of "ritual" is complex and seems to evolve as new arenas of scholarship develop.[3] In her definition, which I take as seminal, Myerhoff states that "ritual is an act or actions intentionally conducted by a group of people employing one or more symbols[4] in a repetitive, formal, precise, highly stylized fashion" (1992: 129). Myerhoff emphasizes that ritual is characterized by action and that "rituals are conspicuously physiological; witness their behavioral basis, the use of repetition and the involvement of the entire human sensorium through dramatic presentations employing costumes, masks, colors, textures, odors, foods, beverages, songs, dances, props, settings, and so forth" (1992: 129). For Myerhoff, rituals are by nature repetitive and formal, because "people must recognize what rituals are saying, and find their claims authentic, their styles familiar and aesthetically satisfying" (1992: 130). It is through the use of symbols that rituals can be distinguished from custom and habit. Rituals "may accomplish tasks, accompany routine and instrumental procedures, but they always go beyond them, endowing some larger meaning to activities they are associated with" (1992: 130).

For Myerhoff, one of the functions of ritual is to frame experience. She notes that "in ritual, a bit of behavior or interaction, an aspect of social life, a moment in time is selected, stopped, remarked upon" (1992: 130). And this framing action indicates that some noteworthy event has occurred. Ritual gestures "call the subject's attention to his undertaking. He is acting with awareness. He has taken the activity out of the ordinary flow of habit and routine, and performed the gesture to arouse in himself a particular attitude, demonstrating that his actions mean more than they seem" (1992: 130).

Ritual also establishes a sense of continuity in lives that are marked by impermanence and change.

> Ritual is a prominent element in areas of uncertainty, anxiety, impotence, and disorder. By its repetitive character, ritual provides a message of pattern and predictability. Ritual is an assertion of continuity. Even when dealing with change, ritual connects new events and elements with preceding ones, incorporating them into a stream of precedents so that they are recognized as growing out of tradition and experience. Ritual states enduring and even timeless patterns, thus connects past, present, and future, abrogating history, time, and disruption. (Myerhoff 1978: 164)

And finally, Myerhoff adds that "rituals are not either sacred or secular, rather in high rituals they are closer to the sacred end of the continuum, entirely extraordinary, communicating the *mysterium tremendum* and are often associated with supernatural or spiritual beings. Or, they are closer to the mundane end of the continuum, perfunctory genuflections to form, "good form," meaning good manners that acknowledge and punctuate social interactions, smoothing them eliminating potential disruption, unpredictability and accident" (1992: 130-131). A fine example of ritual at the "mundane end of the continuum" is Katherine R's description of a work-a-day family detail. In one of her narratives, she notes how the R family dealt with a dropped piece of bread:

> Then, also we were wheat farmers, the staff of life. And whenever we dropped a piece of bread, we had to pick it up and kiss it. A kind of asking forgiveness....And whenever we brought in water from the well, we'd say, 'Bless the water,' in Ukrainian, of course, and then somebody would say, 'God blesses the water.'[5]

One of the purposes of ritual is to mark certain events and communicate how and why these events are important. According to M. Wilson, "rituals reveal values at their deepest level…men express in ritual what moves them most" (1954: 241). Rituals provide a way of reaffirming social bonds within a group (Turner 1969; Van Gennep 1960). In other words, "those who share your rituals are part of your community, and those who do not understand the meaning behind what occurs are not" (Leeds-Hurwitz 2002: 89). Rituals transform the participants, creating a community of separate individuals, and supplying a single identity for that community (Martin, 1996). According to Kertzer, "through participation of such rituals, people's dependence on their social group is continually brought to their mind. Just as importantly, it is through these rites that the boundaries of the social group, the group of people to whom the individual feels allegiance, are defined" (1988: 62). We concur with Myerhoff who notes that ritual is a social event in which

> Ordinary time is suspended and a new time instituted, geared to the event taking place, shared by those participating, integrating the private experience into a collective one. These moments of community built outside of ordinary time are rare and powerful, forging an intense communion which transcends awareness of individual separateness (Myerhoff 1978: 199).

How does ritual observance convey family identity? Bennett, Wolin and McAvity have argued convincingly that rituals and [family] myths are key transmitters of family identity. For them, a family's shared beliefs are carried and transmitted by its rituals and myths (1988: 230). And because the family can be thought of as a group—"a network of individuals related by kinship and including two or more generations" (Bertaux & Thompson 1993: 2)—rituals reaffirm bonds within the family group and present a single family identity to the greater community, outside of the family. Myerhoff suggests the reaffirmation of family bonds by noting that "socially, ritual links immediate fellow participants but often goes beyond this to connect a group of celebrants to wider collectivities—absent members, the ancestors, and those as yet unborn" (1978: 165). For Bennett, Wolin and McAvity, "rituals enact the family identity" (1988:215). The rituals that a family chooses to observe,[6] serve to communicate to its members who they are and how they fit into the scheme of the family system, much of which is inherited as family tradition, and additionally, how the family fits into the community in which it exists. For example, how a family prepares for and hosts a rite of passage ritual, such as a wedding, is an identity-solidifying experience for all family members and an opportunity for the community to see the family as an identity unit at work.

According to scholar David Reiss, "the coordinated practices" of the entire family maintain stability and coherence for the family and among these coordinated practices is ritual (Reiss 1989: 193). Reiss maintains that " rituals in simple societies, in religious practice, and in families are regularly enacted because it is in the coordinated practice of such behaviors that the group itself can be maintained" (Reiss 1989: 193). He goes on to argue that "most major rituals have an initiate or corrective function. They realign individual representation with group practice" (Reiss 1989: 193). In other words, individual family members are reminded that they are part of a whole, of a family system or entity. For Reiss, ritual observation[7] refers "to behavioral interactional regularities in family systems" (Reiss 1989: 204).

Among the features of ritual observance in the family that Reiss distinguishes are (1) that rituals are practiced by the whole family; (2) that rituals, for the most part, are anticipated and prepared for, which serves to set them off from more mundane aspects of family life; (3) that rituals are "preemptory," which is to say that families set aside their ordinary practices to give rituals first place; (4) that rituals are "self-sustaining and self-corrective," that is, families know the rituals well and members who deviate from one or another practice are usually reminded or persuaded to fall into place; (5) that rituals are rich with symbolism; and (6) that rituals are "transmitting," that is that they convey a rich and impressive image of family life to outsiders, to growing children, and in many instances to the next generation (Reiss 1989: 207). Rituals "represent ways through which the family organizes and communicates perceptions of the world to its members" (Pratt & Fiese 2004: 4). These views and values may be passed down through the generations as a result of family interaction. "Stories [personal narratives] are embedded within family rituals…and serve to convey family belief systems" (Pratt & Fiese 2004: 4).

Before Ukrainian villagers from Galicia and Bukovyna came to Canada,[8] while they still lived in their Old World villages, they were connected to their families and to their neighbors through ritual observance. Robert B.Klymasz notes, that among these villagers, an age-old fixation with the land as the giver of nourishment, life, sustenance and abundance, as well as "a variety of factors—social, economic, geographical, historical, and biological—had combined to foster the development of an amazingly rich corpus of folk tradition [belief and ritual]" (Klymasz 1992: 11). Klymasz speaks at some length about calendar rituals observed among these villagers. Agrarian pursuits in 19th century Bukovyna and Galicia were governed by the pattern of four seasons. Klymasz states that "the perennial flow of seasons from winter to spring, summer and fall constitutes a momentous life-and-death drama that through repetition had already ingrained itself upon the life and psyche of Ukrainian peasant emigrants prior to their departure for Western Canada" (Klymasz 1992: 11). Thus, the year was seen as a fundamentally cyclic structure based upon the repetition of the seasons. "Precise linearity and time-telling literateness focussed on exact dates (exemplified by modern concerns with birthdays, Mother's Day, anniversaries and other date-celebrations…) were alien methods of time-management" (1992: 21).[9] The 19th century villagers possessed a rich calendar repertoire of saint's days, holy days and religious feast days by which they marked the passage of time and found occasion for celebration, commemoration and lamentation (1992: 1).

It is not an objective of this dissertation to enumerate and describe all the calendar rituals that an average Ukrainian villager would or could have been familiar with.[10] I would, however, like to give a flavor of the seasonal ritual cycle in the village and some of the calendar rituals commonly observed.[11] The winter (*zyma*) period of calendar celebrations began in late November and continued through early March. In it were included feast days for St. Andrew (*Andriia*),[12] St. Nicolas (*Mykolaia*),[13] Christmas Eve (*sviat vechir*),[14] Christmas day (*rizdvo*), New Year's Eve (*Malanka/shchedriy vechir*),[15] New Year's Day, Epiphany (*Iordan*),[16] and *Stritennia*.[17] The spring (*vesna*) period commenced more or less with Lent (*pist*) in February and continued approximately through June. Among spring calendar ritual observations were *Blahovishchennia*,[18] Willow Sunday (*Verbna nedilia*),[19] Easter (*Velykden*),[20] *Provody*,[21] *Zeleni Sviata* (Whitsunday)[22] and the feast day of St. George. Summer (*lito*) began at some point in June and proceeded into September with *Kupala* (for St. John the Baptist) and the feast day for Saints Peter and Paul as high points.[23] Autumn (*osin'*) stretched from September through November, and according to Voropai, encompassed the feast days of St. Simeon (September 14), St Demitrius (November 8) and St. Michael (November 21), as well as three feast days devoted to the purity of women (Voropai II, 239 and 265). The Old World autumn calendar ritual period seems to have been the busiest. Once these Bukovynian and Galician villagers reached western Canada, their ritual observances all began to change.[24]

A major distinctive feature that pervades pre-immigration Ukrainian folklore and ritual is the distinction between Catholic and Orthodox churches (Klymasz 1992: 169). According to Klymasz, "the Orthodox part of the tradition is generally recognized in the scholarship as being particularly rich and archaic; the Catholic part has been, over the centuries, more effectively purged or 'cleansed' of pagan survival" (1992: 169). He goes on to say, "this religious situation in Western Ukraine was reinforced by parallel, co-relating and well-defined regional and ethnic boundaries that coincided with the religious lines of demarcation" (1992: 169). There was a conservative Orthodox Bukovynian tradition and a more liberal Galician Catholic tradition in western Ukraine, the patterns of which were transferred to western Canada.[25]

For Klymasz the Bukovynian variant of the Ukrainian folklore custom and belief is somewhat more "conservative, retentive, interiorly focussed and superstitious in nature" (1992: 168). The Galician variant is "liberal, accommodative, exteriorly focused and pragmatic in nature" (Klymasz 1992: 168). His research in east central Alberta has led him to conclude that, at least in east central Alberta by 1930, people of Bukovynian extraction retained "a more archaic stratum of folk custom and belief" (1992: 168). As a visible sign of this retention, Klymasz refers to "the Bukovynian customs of *pomana* and *provody* with their focus on the past and ancestors" (1992: 168). He notes that in east central Alberta, "numerically outnumbered by a seemingly threatening sea of 'Galicians,' the Bukovynian aspect of the total Ukrainian folklore complex…shows the fostering of differentiation to heighten separateness as a qualitative phenomenon that serves to earn recognition and respect" (1992: 168). Klymasz continues, "The conscious and emotional ties to regional traditions [in Western Ukraine], so prevalent among the Bukovynians, fail to operate with the 'Galicians' who easily question, blur and drop their traditions as required" (1992: 168). For Klymasz, "the Galician aspect of the [Ukrainian folk custom and belief] complex leans toward an on-going and somewhat indiscriminate eclecticism that appears oblivious to the values of the past unless these are supportive of current needs and objectives" (1992: 168).

Klymasz has researched and written at some length about the changing situation in the Ukrainian folklore [and ritual] complex among Bukovynian and Galician immigrants to east central Alberta, the area where the R family homesteaded and where the K family ultimately established its second home. There were variations in ritual observance influenced by regional origin in Ukraine (Klymasz 1992: 167). And after immigration, because of differences, between their Old Country homes and their new homes in Western Canada—that is, differences in climate, population density, technological innovation, regional background, varieties of church membership, periods of settlement and areas in the settlement regions—the Bukovynians and Galicians modified the manner in which they carried out ritual activity (Klymasz 1992: 3).

Initially, the "total absence of any of the old environmental systems and structures — social, physical, spiritual—that had been supportive of folkloric behaviour as it existed in the Old Country," threatened the continuity of ritual observance (Klymasz 1992: 153). Without churches, clergy or a familiar calendar, the villagers' ritual adherence was forced into limbo. Klymasz notes that, and it is significant enough to quote at length:

> The initial trauma of dislocation and the subsequent period of fragmentation hit hardest at village folk customs and family ritual….The Old Country village get-togethers and evening entertainments never took root in the new Canadian environment: indeed, the word for 'village' in Ukrainian, *selo*, and the word *vechernytsi* (meaning 'evening parties') represent experiences that were never duplicated in Canada. Outside and away from its native context in the Old Country, the early Ukrainian folkloric tradition in east central Alberta found that it was unattuned to the comparatively harsh climatic conditions on the prairies, to non-traditional settlement patterns, to isolation, and to the absence (initially at least) of churches, cemeteries, village priests, and so on.

> Moreover, what outsiders saw as solid Ukrainian colonies and block settlements was in reality composed of settlers representing different village traditions, each with its own variants, its own preferences, quirks and predilections. Some shared the same traditions; but others didn't. Accordingly, this situation signaled the immediate breakdown (but not total collapse or eclipse) of various customs and rituals associated with the seasonal calendar as well as the human life cycle.
>
> For example, the traditional outdoor Easter singing-games (*haivky*) that required predictable spring weather, a church site and a healthy mix of young, unmarried girls and boys, never really took root in Alberta; similarly, the rich tradition of funeral lamentation could not operate without experienced and professional wailers and related props such as the priest, the cemetery, and the church. Finally, the leisure of Old Country harvest festivals could never be re-established in an environment where notoriously vicissitudinous weather patterns make autumn an anxious and often frantic season for the grain farmer. For the early Ukrainian pioneer immigrant in east central Alberta, it became quickly and painfully apparent that his/her Old Country calendar was not dependable in Canada. (Klymasz 1992: 153-54.)

We have no specific records that tell us how the precursors[26] of the R family and the K family continued or dropped their village/church rituals once they found themselves on the western prairies of Canada. We simply know that they adapted to new conditions. From Klymasz's research, we know that early immigrants to Alberta (1901-1914), observed winter calendar rituals, such as Christmas, St. Andrew's Day, *Malanka, Stritennia*, and *Iordan* (Klymasz 1992: 34-35). For the Easter/Spring ritual cycle, after the Lenten period of fasting, they celebrated Willow Sunday and then Easter itself. After Easter, some observed *provody*, St. John's *Day (na Ivana)*, St. George's Day (*na Iuriia*) and *Zeleni Sviata* (1992: 36-38). They attended *khrams*.[27] Weddings, christenings and funerals were important rite of passage rituals that were observed as well, though in a somewhat truncated form due to a simple lack of resources (Klymasz 1992: 38).

In the case of the R and K families, we do know a few things. For instance, Maria, John and their children—in the family's early days observed Christmas, *Iordan*, Easter, *Zeleni Sviata, Ivana* and as their community grew, an occasional *khram*, various weddings, funerals and christenings. We have the evidence of this in the narratives of the R sisters. Maria's mother, Elena S, with whom the R family had occasional contact, staunchly maintained her Old World Bukovynian village ritual focus. She counted the passage of days using the cyclical ritual feast day calendar deeply embedded in her memory, remembering with ease the various saint's day observances and looking with approbation at the disrespectful souls who worked on those days. Elena seems to have believed fully in the efficacy of blessed water and used it medicinally when the appropriate occasion called for it. And it was she who knew the ritual songs of grieving and used them on more than one occasion to mourn a son and to facilitate a "proper" funerary ritual for her family.

And as for the K family, it was through them that I first encountered *provody*, the blessing of Easter baskets at a small town church, and the ritual importance of *kutia* and the twelve meatless dishes on Christmas Eve. I had no awareness of these ritual activities from the R side of my family. I came to Canada to study Ukrainian folklore with a relatively blank slate, in other words, I had no idea that there were such ritual events as *provody* or foods, such as *kutia*. I was introduced to such Ukrainian-Canadian ritual activity by the K family and surprised by their unselfconscious active embracing of it; being more closely associated with the R side of my extended family, I had no experience of this activity myself.

The K sisters, with the help of Uncle Harry, describe in their narratives their grandparents, Maksym and Annie H, as keenly observant people in terms of ritual celebration. Maksym and Annie attended to Christmas rituals with diligence, for example, covering the floor of their *khata* with straw to a depth of half-a-meter to suggest the Christ child's having been born in a manger, one among other equally classical ritual gestures they would be remembered for. Annie reserved New Year's Day as a time for foretelling what the new year's future would hold. She, too, relied on the positive properties of Blessed Water to keep her family medicinally secure. Their home was a home of prayer and reverential behavior for Ukrainian-Canadian ritual calendar events. This attitude seems to have been absorbed by the K family—Andrew and Anna and their children—living on the adjacent quarter-section, a mere twenty-minute walk away from Maksym and Annie. Although at some point there would be a religious/political schism between Maksym, the fervent Ukrainian Catholic, and Andrew K, who would work to create the Independent Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the community,[28] the sensibility of respect for and embracing activity around Ukrainian-Canadian ritual practice seems to have been similar among the K family and the (grandparent) H family.

From the narrative evidence we have, in the beginning, the K family, like the R family, observed *khram*, weddings, funerals, Christmas, New Year's Eve/*Malanka, Iordan*, Easter and *Zeleni Sviata.* As subsequent analysis of both family's personal narratives hopes to reveal, the significant elements of R and K family identity rest upon, not so much what they chose to observe and honor in ritual, but what they described their observance to be. And here, I mean "describe" in terms of attitude and feeling for ritual, not the procedural steps for adhering to the actual ritual performance. For it is in their narratives about ritual observance that they refashion and reveal what they consider to be family identity. I have noted that rituals transmit a family's shared beliefs; they establish a single identity and reaffirm social bonds for the group, in this case, for the family. The rituals are key as a marker of family identity.

The R family, Bukovynian in its origin, and the K family of Galician heritage seem to echo Klymasz's observations, his Bukovynian-Galician dichotomy, concerning variant folk traditions—that complex of rituals, customs and beliefs—with origins in the Old Country. Based upon his interviews and research among Ukrainian-Canadian-Galicians, Klymasz isolates a number of characteristics that seem to adhere to their manner of interfacing with "folk tradition," or ritual practice.[29] Klymasz hypothesizes that Ukrainian-Canadians of Galician extraction are characteristically "liberal, accommodative, exteriorly focused and pragmatic" (1992: 168).

We will see that the K family, in its attitude towards ritual, bears some resemblance to these features. A gregarious group of public-spirited individuals who support and participate in community endeavors, the K sisters describe the family's ritual practice in a way that would lead one to believe that they enjoyed and embraced their Ukrainian-Canadian ritual traditions.

Klymasz's interviews among Ukrainian-Canadian-Bukovynians enable him to isolate a number of characteristics that seem to adhere to their manner of interfacing with "folk tradition." Klymasz hypothesizes that Ukrainian-Canadians of Bukovynian extraction are characteristically "conservative, retentive, interiorly focused and superstitious" (1992: 168). We will see that the R family does not bear a resemblance to this model, at least in broad profile. Indeed, through the R sisters' narratives about family ritual celebrations, the shared family belief/family identity would seem to incorporate the idea of progressivism and a marked avoidance of superstitious practice or hyper-religious qualities. All five R sisters interviewed for this study, make a point to note or to infer somewhere in a narrative, "we were not superstitious; we were not religious."

The R sisters do not seem to attach any particular joy to the observance of Ukrainian-Canadian rituals, at least theirs is not the delight we see among the K sisters. For the R sisters, and by extension, for the R family, ritual observance seems gravid with unspoken undesirable traits, incorporated under the term "superstitious," or symbolic of unwanted authority in the form of patriarchial and patronizing clergy. Although the family is actively involved in community endeavors, it is a top-down kind of involvement—according to his eldest son, John R is president of the school board of trustees, not a rank-and-file board member. The sense is that the Rs were leaders, unafraid to take controversial stands, and that others in the community followed in their wake. Whether this is true or not, is irrelevant. The significant point is that the R family, in its narratives, has perpetuated this belief about itself, and thus the belief is a significant family identity marker.

I would argue that the R family has reversed the polarity of the Bukovynian type in its family identity narratives. They are just as vigorous in denying their "superstitiousness" as Klymasz's theoretical Bukovynian type is portrayed as embracing it. The fact that Maria has made a conscious break from the beliefs and ritual practices of her mother, Elena, is significant. We will see that Maria is presented by her daughters, the R sisters, as an unsentimental and out-spoken advocate for casting off the old ways. From their narratives, one has the sense that Maria ceased to think of ritual observance as bonding, relevant, or value-laden. It would seem that she did not want herself or her family to be associated with ritual observance. She sent her children to school; church was not so important. The R sisters, in their narratives, try to disassociate themselves from ritual observation. More than once and in a seeming chorus, they make vehement denials: "We were not superstitious. We were not like those others. We were different."

We turn now to an analysis of the R sisters' and the K sisters' narratives to see what we might learn from them about the construction and expression of family identity.

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[1] A rite of passage ritual is one marking the major life stages through which most members of a society pass: birth, puberty, marriage and death. (Leeds-Hurwitz 2002:93)

[2] A calendar ritual marks events in the seasonal cycle, for example, a harvest festival or a solstice. Among calendar rituals, Ukrainian-Canadians observed Christmas (*Rizdvo*), New Year's Eve/ *Malanka*, Epiphany (*Iordan*), Easter and Whitsunday (*Zeleni Sviata*), to name a few.

I will refer to the rituals practiced by both the R family and the K family as Ukrainian-Canadian rituals. The roots of the rituals these families observed came from their ancestral villages in Ukraine and could be considered, before immigration, Podillian (village of Chornivka—Bukovynian) and Boiko (village of Ulyncho—Galician) rituals, as practiced in the 19th century with regional variations. But once the R family and the K family arrived in Canada, they and the rituals they observed had to adapt to new conditions. Even though some of the ritual material may have continued unchanged, some of it, by virtue of a different environment and climate, was changed.

Robert Klymasz makes note of this when he refers to an 1899 source that bemoans the loss of ritual activity in Canada: "The first to disappear are the complex rituals that are so rooted in our village population. Inconceivable here [in Canada] are those long wedding rituals, those christenings, those harvest festivals, those feast days, in general that whole network of rituals that envelops the whole life of our poor peasant (Quotation taken from *Kievskaia starina*, 66, 1899: 109)" (Klymasz 1992: 8).

[3] For example, in his essay on "ritual" in *Folklore, Cultural Performances And Popular Entertainments*, Roy A. Rappaport notes that "Ritual may be defined as the *performance* of more or less invariant sequences of formal acts and utterances not encoded by the performers" (Bauman 1992: 249).

[4] A symbol is "something that stands for or suggests something else by reason of relationship, association, convention or accidental but not intentional resemblance, especially, a visible sign of something (as a concept or an institution) that is invisible" (*Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language* 1961: 2316).

[5] Excerpt from personal narrative of Katherine R. 28 April 1994. See page 98 in this dissertation for the fuller version of her narrative.

[6] Current scholarship about families and rituals makes a distinction between larger ritual practice and a family's own ritual "miniculture." For example, a family may observe Christmas or Kwanza—larger ritual practice.

The sociologists Bossard and Boll (1950) recognized that families also develop their own rituals. According to Bossard and Boll, "in analyzing family life from within, our attention came to focus early in our studies upon certain forms of family behavior so

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recurrent as to suggest the term 'habit,' and yet having about them aspects of conscious rigidity and a sense of rightness and inevitability not generally associated with mere habits. They were habitual forms of family behavior, but with added features that made them more than habits. We came ultimately to think of these as family rituals....Many of the rituals of family life have to do with etiquette; others, with the attitude of children toward parents. Or they develop as a part of the routine of child care. One who takes a child for a walk on Sunday afternoon, or reads the comic strips on Sunday morning, or reads a fairy tale before bedtime...is very apt to discover that subsequent developments turn these practices into rituals." (1950: 9-10).

For the second-generation Ukrainian-Canadian R and K sisters, if this distinction existed, they do not refer to it. In their personal narratives, the R and K sisters refer only to what we consider to be aspects of larger ritual observance—Christmas, New Year's, *Iordan*, Easter, and so forth. When we refer to ritual observance in relation to family, we have the larger ritual observances in mind.

[7] According to Reiss, "the sociologists Bossard and Boll (1950) recognized that families, as 'minicultures,' also develop their own rituals" (Reiss 1989: 207). However, when we refer to ritual observation within the family, we are not referring to such a miniculture. Rather, among the families that we are discussing, we consider ritual observation to be tied to church and community, to religious and folk belief deriving from Old World Ukrainian culture.

[8] Villagers who came to Western Canada from Bukovyna or from Galicia for the most part did not refer to themselves as Ukrainian until the 1920s, when a gradually developing Ukrainian national consciousness moved to the fore. However, their mother tongue was Ukrainian, albeit with certain differences due to dialect. Of course, there were Romanian speakers as well. When they first arrived in Canada, the Old World villagers were referred to as, "Ruthenian," but ultimately were labeled "Ukrainian," although the villagers first thought themselves to be Bukovynian, Galician, Austrian, Russian, Polish or Rusyn from Bukovyna or Galicia. For the sake of expediency, I will refer to the immigrants as "Ukrainian."

[9] This is not to say that there were not clocks in Bukovyna or Galicia at the time of immigration or that villagers were not familiar with linear/clock time. Luciuk and Hryniuk note that " between 1880 and 1910 Eastern Galicia and Bukovyna were provided with modern communications. By 1872, main railway lines connected both regions with other parts of the Austrian empire and with Western Europe....Many small towns and villages were now on a railway line, others often no more than a few kilometres from a station" (Hryniuk 1991: 4)" It is just that for the most part, the villagers' daily lives were governed by their traditional ritual seasonal cycles.

[10] For the purposes of this study, I am primarily interested in Ukrainian villagers from the ethnographic regions of Podilla, where the S family and the R family originated, and Boikivshchyna, where the H family and the K family originated. Stated another way, in

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the 19th century, the S and R family village of Chornivka in northern Bukovyna was considered to be part of the ethnographic region designated as Podilla. Similarly, the H and K family village of Ulychno in Galicia was considered to be part of the ethnographic region designated as Boikivshchyna.

[11] My sources for village calendar celebrations are both general and specific. I rely on encyclopedia accounts by scholars Kubijovyc and Struk, which give an over-all sense of Ukrainian calendar celebrations. I rely on Kylymnyk and Voropai, two Ukrainian scholars who fled war-torn Ukraine in the 20th century, to write their accounts of 19th century ritual celebrations from the distance of Winnipeg and Munich, respectively. Kylymnyk writes about the customs of north central Ukraine, that is, Volyn'. Voropai writes in great detail, but of the Ukrainian people in general. Kozholianko is a specific source for 19th and 20th century Bukovyna. And the books on Boikivshchyna (1983) and Podillia (1994) are my sources for 19th century village customs for those two ethnographic regions. Additionally, Ukrainian-Canadian scholar Klymasz provides specific commentary from 19th century Bukovynian and Galician villagers, Old World neighbors of the R and K families, who emigrated to Canada at the same time as the R and K elders and settled in near-by communities, essentially experiencing similar "pioneer" events as they struggled to establish themselves.

There is a rich fund of material about the Grekul family, with roots in the village of Toporivtsi, a mere mile from the village of Chornivka in Bukovyna, which could shed light on the S and R families—what they may have celebrated and how. Ukrainian-Canadian researcher Hohol' writes about the Grekul family, its history and experience, particularly in Smoky Lake, Alberta, a community largely settled by northern Bukovynian immigrants. This important material can be read in situ by appointment, but is not available to scholars for publication. Since 1985 there have been unresolved problems regarding its release, according to Radomir Bilash, Senior Researcher, Alberta Community Development, Historic Sites Service, Edmonton, Alberta, who has been in charge of this material for the past twenty years.

[12] St. Andrew's day (*Andriia*), on December 13th, was named after the apostle Andrew, who reputedly journeyed to Ukrainian territory to preach. Evidently connected to pre-Christian culture, it is a time for courting. With various games, maids try to divine who their future husbands will be. According to Ukrainian-Canadian, Katherine Orlecki, originally from the Bukovynian village of Toporivtsi [a stone's throw from the R family ancestral village of Chornivka], 'the girls went outside in the snow, took off their shoes and threw them over the roof of the house; a girl's betrothed was supposedly in the direction of dogs barking at this action. Another activity was for the girls to tie posts (*kolyky vviezaly*). They would count aloud saying "Not one, not two" and so on right up to "ten" (*ni oden, ni dva…*). If the tenth post had bark on it, this was a good sign; if the bark had fallen off, this meant a bald husband.' (Klymasz 1992: 34)

[13] St. Nicolas Day, on December 19th, is a day of feasting and joy. Children are given gifts from the saint.

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[14] "The most interesting part of Ukrainian Christmas is Christmas Eve (*sviat vechir*) with its wealth of ritual and magical acts aimed at ensuring a good harvest and a life of plenty. Dead ancestors and family members are believed to participate in the eve's celebration and are personified by a sheaf of wheat called *did* or *didukh* (grandsire). A characteristic feature of Christmas is caroling (*koliaduvannia*) which expresses respect for the master of the house and his children and is sometimes accompanied by a puppet theater (*vertep*), an individual dressed up as a goat, and a handmade star (*zvizda*). The religious festival lasts three days and involves Christmas liturgies (particularly on the first day), caroling, visiting, and entertaining relatives and acquaintances." (Kubijovyc 1984: Volume I, pp. 461)

According to Maria Pan'kiv Charuk, a Ukrainian-Canadian of Galician extraction whose ancestral village was not far from that of the H family and the K family, Christmas Eve dinner began when the evening star appeared; there was no tree but a sheaf of rye behind the table in the corner, straw under the table where the children scrambled for nuts, hay on the table, and the twelve dishes. (Klymasz 1992: 46)

Except for the preparation of the 'holy supper,' all work was halted during the day, and the head of the household saw to it that everything was in order and that the entire family was at home. Towards the evening the head of the house went to the threshing floor to get a bundle of hay and a sheaf of rye, barley, or buckwheat; with a prayer he brought them into the house, spread the hay, and placed the sheaf of grain (the *didukh*) in the place of honor (under the icons). Hay or straw was strewn under and on top of the table, which the housewife then covered with a tablecloth. (Kubijovyc 1984: Volume I, pp. 461)

The 'holy supper' on Christmas Eve is a meal of twelve ritual meatless and milkless dishes. The order of the dishes and even the dishes themselves are not uniform everywhere, for every region adheres to its own tradition. [Among these dishes were included the ritualistically important *kutia* (cooked wheat grains mixed with honey and poppy seeds), beans, fish, boiled potato dumplings (*pyrohy*), cabbage rolls (*holubtsi*), soup, and stewed fruit.]. (Kubijovyc 1984: Volume I, pp. 461)

The evening meal was accompanied by a special ceremony. When the *kutia* [cooked whole-wheat grains, honey, and ground poppy seeds] was served, the head of the house took the first spoonful, opened the window or went out into the yard, sometimes with an ax in his hand, and invited the 'frost to eat *kutia*.' On re-entering the house, he threw the first spoonful to the ceiling: an adhesion of many grains signified a rich harvest and augured a good swarming of bees. The head of the house then took some food from every dish and, placing it with some flour in a trough, carried it out to the cattle and gave it to them to eat. At the evening meal fortunes were told. After the meal three spoonfuls of each dish were placed on a separate plate for the souls of the dead relatives and spoons were left for them. (Kubijovyc 1984: Volume I, pp. 461-62)

On Christmas Eve, a clear (evening) sky portended good crops. It was a belief that hoarfrost on the trees foretold a good yield of corn. People also believed that on this day, livestock would have the ability to speak [to God]. (Podilla 1994: 365)

Carolling and mumming activities were the reserve of boys who would go to homes where a girl lived. As Christmas carollers, the boys kept and divided any proceeds among themselves, and *Malanka* mumming occurred on New Year's Eve, the evening of January 13th. (Klymasz 1992: 42)

[15] *Malanka*, also know as *shchedryi vechir* (generous eve), is a Ukrainian folk feast observed on New Year's Eve. Traditionally, *Malanka* (a bachelor dressed in women's clothing), with a dressed-up goat, gypsy, old man, old woman, Jew, and other characters and musicians, went from house to house in the village supposedly to put the households in order. But instead of bringing order *Malanka* played all kinds of pranks. In some locales young men and women brought a plow into the house and pretended to plow a field. The folk play was concluded with caroling." (Struk 1993: Volume III, p. 288)

According to a Bukovynian source, *Malanka* is about the cult of ancestors. It was once believed that several times a year, on major holy days (*sviata*), the dead rise from the graves to see their immediate families. That is why *Malanka* participants were dressed like the dead from the other world. They behave in anti-social ways, with ritual misbehavior. (Podillia 1994: 369)

[16] *Iordan* (Epiphany), or *Vodokhreshcha* (Blessing of Water), on January 19th, was the day when all water—the streams, ponds, lakes, rivers—was blessed. Ukrainians refer to this holy day as *Iordan*, because Christ was baptized in the river Jordan, and *Vodokhreshcha*, because the greater service of blessing water takes place on this day. (Voropai 1958 and Kubijovyc 1984)

"The Orthodox Church considers *Iordan* to be one of its most holy days, second in importance only to *Velykden* (Easter Sunday). It was celebrated in the early centuries of the Christian Church together with Christ's birth in a single celebration entitled Epiphany, 'the Manifestation of God in the Holy Trinity.' The church teaches that Christ asked John the Baptist to baptize him in the river Jordan. When he did so, the heavens opened, the Holy spirit descended upon Christ in the form of a dove, and the voice of God the Father was heard from heaven saying, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.'" (Kubijovyc 1984: Volume I, p. 834)

"The principal ceremony of *Iordan* (Epiphany) traditionally consisted of the solemn outdoor blessing of waters, usually at a river or at a well, where a cross was erected out of blocks of ice (nowadays water is usually blessed inside the church). A procession was led to the place of ceremony. After the blessing of the water, everyone present drank the water and also took some home to be kept there for a whole year....Following the feast of *Iordan* , parish priests visit the parishioners' homes and bless them with the new holy water." (Kubijovyc 1984: Volume I, p. 834)

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[17] *Stritennia*, February 15th, was celebrated to mark the time when summer met winter (in Christian tradition, Candlemas Day, the feast of Christ's presentation at the temple). (Voropai 1958: 197)

[18] *Blahovishchennia*, on April 7th, a solemn observance of the Annunciation, seems to have pre-Christian roots. On this day the belief is that God places his hand in the earth, so that it begins to revive (Voropai 1958: 277).

[19] "The last Sunday before Easter (Palm Sunday) is called Willow Sunday *(Verbna nedilia)*. On this day pussy-willow [or willow] branches are blessed in the church. The people tap one another with these branches, repeating the wish: 'Be as tall as the willow, as healthy as the water, and as rich as the earth.' They also use the branches to drive the cattle to pasture for the first time, and then the father or eldest son thrusts his branch into the earth for luck." (Kubijovyc 1984: Volume I, p. 780)

Ukrainian-Canadian, Katherine Orlecki, from a near-by village (Toporivtsi) to the R family in Bukovyna, notes that the blessed willow branches "were not discarded but kept at home to avert hail. This was very helpful; when the hail came, a branch was thrown outside in front of the house to make the hail pass by/away." (Klymasz 1992: 36)

[20] In the Ukrainian language, Easter is called *Velykden*, "the great day." "Easter is a feast of joy and gladness that unites the entire community in common celebration. For three days the community celebrates to the sound of [church] bells and to the singing of spring songs—*vesnianky*. Easter begins with the Easter matins and high mass, during which the *pasky* (traditional Easter breads), *pysanky* [decorated] and *krashanky* [solid colored, often red] (Easter eggs) are blessed in the church. Butter, lard, cheese, roast suckling pigs, sausage, smoked meat, and little napkins containing poppy seeds, millet, salt, pepper, and horseradish are also blessed. After the matins all the people in the congregation exchange Easter greetings, give each other *krashanky*, and then hurry home with their baskets of blessed food." (Kubijovyc 1984: Volume I, pp. 780-81)

"After the blessing of the *paska* [and the other foodstuffs in their Easter baskets], [people] ran as fast as they could to the house, in order to have a happy year. After the end of the official dinner, the entertainment began, which lasted for three days. The young people started to play different games with *krashanky*. When [people] saw each other, they exchanged painted eggs (*pysanky*)." (Boikivshchyna 1983: 236)

Kubijovyc notes that "the *krashanky* and *pysanky* Easter eggs are an old pre-Christian element and have an important role in the Easter rites. They are given as gifts or exchanged as a sign of affection." (1984: Volume I, pp. 781)

"On *Velykden* they ring the bells for the whole day…every villager tries to grab the rope several times and ring the church bell, because it will bring happiness, and furthermore, they'll have a good crop of buckwheat." (Voropai 1958: 411)

"On the first day of *Velykden*, all members of the family wash with the *krashanka*. The housewife puts several [*krashanky*] eggs in a basin of water and throws a small coin into it and everyone washes in this water, one by one. They believed that when they washed with the *krashanka*, their skin would be healthy, the same as a *krashanka*—red and rich. The girl who wants to marry, if she washes first with the *krashanka*, soon after *Velykden* she'll marry and be happy and healthy." (Kylymnyk 1962: 98-99)

[21] *Provody*, occurring after Easter, is a service at the cemetery in memory of the dead. Families gather at the cemetery to have the graves of their ancestors blessed (Klymasz 1992: 210).

[22] *Zeleni Sviata* (Green Holidays,Whitsuntide, Rosalia or Rusallia) which occurs fifty days after Easter, is a summer feast day associated with the pagan cult of the dead and the *rusalky*, water nymphs. "The name 'Rusallia' is derived from the ancient Roman festival of the roses (23 May), which reached Ukraine via the southern Slavs....On the eve of the feast, houses were adorned with green branches and linden or maple leaves. In church the floor was covered with fragrant grasses, including wormwood. On the feast day itself green branches were set up in the fields to protect the growing grain from thunder and evil spirits and to ensure fertility." (Struk 1993: Volume IV, p 407)

On *Zeleni Sviata* Ukrainians from Podillia [among these the R family when its earlier generations resided in Chornivka] must decorate the yard, the house and outlying buildings with green branches from trees—one tree was prohibited, the tree of Judas Iscariot [*Cercis siliquastrum*]. Customarily, they put branches in the storage areas, on gates, in windows and behind icons. At the same time, they covered their earthen floors with fragrant grasses, such as mint..." (Podilla 1994: 378)

On *Zeleni Sviata*, the Boiki [K family ancestry is that of the Boiko ethnic group in Galicia/Ukraine] decorated their houses, other out buildings, and fences near the yard with greens. The reason was "to protect themselves and their household from *rusalky*." The other reason was to prevent [the *rusalky*] from flying into the house and tickling everybody to death. (Boikivshchyna 1983: 237)

[23] The feast day of St. John the Baptist, known also as *Kupala*, occurs on July 7th. Its symbols are those of purifying water and fire. It is a summer celebration of youth and love. Pre-Christian in origin, *Kupala* was much-criticized by the church for its frivolity.

[24] In Alberta, the longest season is winter, a slow period for farm work, but an opportunity for other activities. According to Klymasz, "the winter cycle of customs and celebrations became the most productive and fully developed seasonal cycle of folk ritual [in Alberta]. As the year drew nearer to autumn and the community's preoccupation with harvest, the number of calendaric celebrations and rituals was gradually reduced to almost nothing" (1992: 23).

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[25] Interestingly, in east central Alberta, a geographical reversal took place with regard to the relative positions of the Bukovynian and Galician spheres (Klymasz 1992: 169). In Western Ukraine, the Catholic Galicians held a dominant geographical position of influence, whereas the Orthodox Bukovynians resided further to the south in an area considered less dominant (a backwater). However, Klymasz states that in east central Alberta, as a function of settlement patterns, "the resultant geographical reversal placed the conservative Orthodox Bukovynian tradition in a central dominant position of influence that promoted the infiltration of surrounding pockets of Galician-Catholic tradition with such strikingly original Bukovynian customs as *Malanka* and *pomana*" (1992: 169).

Pomana is a Bukovynian and Romanian custom. It is a ceremonial presentation of certain food items (sometimes along with a candle) in memory of one or more deceased persons for whom and on whose behalf the recipient is asked or expected to pray. Suitable occasions for the distribution of *pomana* gift items include funerals and commemorative diners in memory of the dead, cemetery services such as *provody*, and after the blessing of garden produce on August 19th (*Preobrazeniie*). Occasionally, clothing of the deceased person is distributed as *pomana*. "*Pomana*" can also have an extended meaning to designate a commemorative event which honors the memory of the deceased with a church service and a funeral/commemorative dinner (Klymasz 1992: 209).

[26] By "precursors" I am referring to the grandparent generation, in other words Maria's parents, Ivan and Elena S; John R's parents, Wasyl and Magdalena R; Anna's parents, Maksym and Annie H. Andrew K's parents remained in their village of Ulychno, Galicia (Drohobych raion, L'vivska oblast, Ukraine). Little is known of them. This grandparent generation had only and always known their Bukovynian and Galician village and church rituals.

[27] A *khram* is an annual parish feast day celebration held on the day of the church's consecration (Klymasz 1992: 202).

[28] Andrew K's "Independent Ukrainian Orthodox Church" seems to have been the name for the church. It is listed as such in a well-researched family history by Olynyk, Pylypow and Pylypow (1987). Whether it was affiliated with the Independent Greek church remains a question (see Darlington 1991: 67). Once Andrew K removed his family from the Birmingham, SK, area in 1928, church membership fell off sharply. The church building remained standing in the 1970s, but sometime thereafter, was pulled down.

[29] Klymasz refers to his Bukovynian-Galician dichotomy as differentiation within the "folk tradition" (1992: 168). Because Klymasz's over-arching study is expressly about celebrating Ukrainian-Canadian ritual, I consider his term, "folk tradition," to encompass ritual observance and belief.

R Family Origins

The five R sisters—Nancy, Katherine, Anne, Vera and Alice—who feature in this discussion grew up as the second generation of a Ukrainian-Canadian family of eleven children.[1] Their parents, John R[2] and Maria S,[3] emigrated to an area in the Northwest Territories, later to become Alberta, Canada, along with their own parents, the R sisters' grandparents. These grandparents are important because of their links to "Old Country" ways and what they passed on to their children and grandchildren. However, in the R family, the grandparents have only a slight physical presence, and seem to have interacted with their grandchildren only rarely.

John R's parents, Wasyl R and Magdalena, along with John, George, Elizabeth, Mary and Veronica, settled on a quarter section[4] that was chosen, in part, because the three adjacent quarters were available for Magdalena's two brothers, Myhailo T and Petro T, and cousin Konstantyn T, and their families, who had traveled in tandem with the Wasyl R family.[5] Thus, in 1898 and 1899, they formed a kind of extended family community. By 1902 John R was working in the coal mines of Lethbridge to earn money for the $10 registration fee for a quarter section. He and his mining buddy, another recent arrival from Bukovyna, Nicolai L, found and filed for adjacent quarter sections just west of Soda Lake in 1902.[6] By 1903, John had met and on June 7th, married Maria S.[7] He was twenty-eight years old and Maria was nineteen. The couple lived with Wasyl R and Magdalena for a short period of time, until they had constructed a *burdei* on John R's Soda Lake quarter section.[8] It seems that once they relocated to the Soda Lake quarter section, John R and Maria ceased to maintain active ties with Wasyl R and Magdalena, her brothers and their families.[9] As for other R family relations, George R, the younger brother of John R, established a family and a farm near the town of Andrew, approximately fifteen miles away from the R family's Soda Lake farm, but the two families rarely interacted.[10] Distance, the burden of round-the-clock farm work, and the logistics of a large family seem to have mitigated against frequent visits among R family members.

During his life, Wasyl R occasionally visited his son John and observed John's growing family, but he seems not to have been particularly close to the family.[11] The R children never knew their paternal grandmother, Magdalena, and seem not to have met Wasyl R's second wife.[12] And thus, although extended family lived around them, the R children do not seem to have interacted with these people a great deal.

Maria's parents, Ivan S and Elena, along with Maria, Alex, Gus and Bill, arrived in the Northwest Territories in 1897, and applied for a quarter section near Wostok, Alberta.[13] By 1903, she had married and moved to her husband's quarter section. Three years later, Maria's parents and brothers began the first of their series of relocations around the Pacific Northwest.[14] The two generations of the family—Ivan S and Elena, John R and Maria, did not see each other until 1912-1913. This was the first time the R children met their S grandparents. Their homecoming to Soda Lake was a joyful one.[15] Serendipitously, John R and Maria had recently vacated their *khata*[16] in favor of their first wood-frame, English-style, house, completed in 1912, and so, were able to offer the *khata* to Elena S and Ivan.

Records do not exist to tell us how long Ivan and Elena S lived in the *khata* of their daughter and son-in-law at Soda Lake. They seem to have lived quietly and separately from the R family.[17] Elena's granddaughters, the R sisters, have little to say about her presence at Soda Lake. Later, Katherine and Anne mention Elena in conjunction with their childhood stays with her at her homestead near St. Paul.[18] By 1920 Ivan and Elena S had relocated to a homestead of their own, about seventy-five miles to the northeast of Soda Lake.[19] Their visits to or with the John R family would be more fleeting after this, for geography (distance) truly did make it more difficult for families to see each other.

Elena had the reputation for being a quiet woman,[20] the counterpoint to her gregarious husband, Ivan. She only spoke Ukrainian and adamantly refused to learn English[21] which would have put her somewhat at odds with the R family, who were trying to learn and to speak English out of a real desire to progress in Canada. Furthermore, her sensibilities were deeply rooted in the calendar rituals and rite of passage rituals of Chornivka.[22] It seems that her most ardent wish was to return to her ancestral village, Chornivka in Bukovyna.

Elena is pivotal to ritual observance in the R family. A rather isolated woman who accompanied her husband and then her son, Nick, from frontier outpost to outpost, she nevertheless maintained a traditional Ukrainian ritual calendar.[23] She seems to have known the feast days and essentially told time by marking them,[24] and she believed in the efficacy of blessed water.[25] It was she who keened over the coffins of her deceased sons Gus and Bill, a moment that granddaughter Katherine R vividly recalls in a narrative, as we will see. She believed in spirits and after her sons' deaths, attributed doors blowing open to the presence of their spirits. From this grandmother, the R sisters witnessed and to some extent absorbed Elena's ritual fervor, her honoring and enacting rites of passage and calendar rituals that she had known in her village.

Whereas Elena appears to have been a silent, perhaps a passive person, her daughter Maria was out-spoken and quick to defend her firmly-held convictions.[26] She had acquired some education at the village school in Chornivka and seems to have been eager to use it.[27] Like all of their Ukrainian-Canadian neighbors, Maria and John R were anxious to get ahead and wanted their children to have as many of the advantages of life in Canada as could be gained. By 1905 they had just moved from their *burdei* [of 1903] to their *khata* with their two infant sons. Early that year, John joined with others in the community to organize and help build a church, St. Demitrius Ruthenian Greek Orthodox Church of Luzan.[28] His and Maria's community involvement kept a steady pace from 1905 on.

In 1907, responsibility for the community's post office at Soda Lake was passed over to John R.[29] In 1910 John became one of the three founding trustees for Pruth School and saw its doors open to his first child in 1912.[30] Later, Maria herself was elected to the district school board.[31] In 1921 John and Maria were among the advocates to build a community hall, the Yuriy Fedkowych Ukrainian Educational Society of Soda Lake.[32] However, a schism had developed in the Soda Lake community between those who wanted a Russian priest at their church and those who wanted a Ukrainian priest, and in 1928, Maria and John were among those who supported a break-away from the original pioneer St. Demitrius church. The R family was among those who helped to build Pruth Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Holy Ascension.[33]

What is significant to the R family side of this dissertation is that John R and Maria were active in community affairs, especially with regard to educational activities, that is, to the development of good schools and educational opportunities, and that they were unafraid of taking controversial stands.[34] But for all this community-related activity, the R family had an inclination to be an insular family. The preponderance of records indicates that their orientation toward community tended to be political in tone, rather than social; whereas, the K family had an orientation toward community that tended to be more social in tone than political. The vector of R family identity was towards progressiveness. The example of Elena's traditional ritual observance was consciously rejected, although the impact of her beliefs was nevertheless felt by the R children and grandchildren.

A Word About Maria

Mother of the R sisters, Maria exerted a profound influence upon her daughters. By all accounts, she was a fighter. As a girl, she had watched debts mount against the family in Chornivka and when the *korchma* proprieter called in the debts,[35] her father, who liked the camaraderie of the *korchma*, was forced to sell their home. She never quite forgave him for the loss of face (nor did her mother, Elena). With the advantage of her village education and the promise of a new life in a new country, Maria did not look back when she left Chornivka. It was a place where she had had little use for the military or for the church, reserving a special scorn for the village priest (See endnote 34). And once Maria arrived in Canada, the destitute straits in which she found herself undoubtedly resolved her further not to be identified with exactly what she had experienced and had come from.[36]

After marriage and the move to her and her husband's own quarter section, Maria worked incessantly both to improve the farm and to improve the lot of her children and her neighbors. She took over her husband's post office responsibilities, refused to be silent at school board meetings, a trait that resulted in her being elected as a school trustee (endnote 26), was active and outspoken in the establishment and maintaining of a community hall, and by virtue of her reading the Ukrainian-Canadian press, was knowledgeable about and held strong opinions regarding local, provincial and national politics. Maria was undoubtedly a catalyst for her family's joining together with like-minded neighbors to establish a new church with a Ukrainian (not a Russian) priest.

Regarding male authority, Maria's attitude seems to have been that she could do things just as well herself. Neither a compromiser, nor a facilitator, Maria was resolute, at times confrontational, and demanding; she pushed her family hard to aim for high achievement; the girls as well as the boys. All of her children were expected to get out of the Soda Lake neighborhood and to compete successfully in the larger world, which, for the most part, they did. Two of her elder children, a boy and a girl, were held back from school. This was as a concession, albeit unfair to those two, to the needs of the farm (demanded by Maria's husband) and no doubt somewhat still connected to Bukovynian traditions of family labor on the fields.

The result of Maria's attitudes of progressiveness, which were certainly apparent by 1918, when she sent her eldest son, who was then fourteen-years old, away for school, her insistence on achievement and the resulting academic successes of her children seem to have set them apart from their neighbors while, at the same time, the R siblings, taking their mother's cue, held themselves apart. Although they considered themselves to be community leaders, Maria and John usually involved themselves in community activities as a necessity or as business, but not as pleasure. From Maria's perspective, life was a serious venture.

Thus from Maria, in essence a nascent suffragist, the R sisters as a group learned to value their ability to think critically and to articulate their thoughts, to value education and to value political activism, particularly progressive political causes. They learned to be self-reliant and to question the authority of men and authority in general. They also learned to regard church (religion) and church activities with a wary gaze or with outright skepticism.

If the R family was engaged in Ukrainian-Canadian ritual observance at the time of its youth, when Al, Sam, Bill, Nancy and Katherine were young children, by 1918, and probably earlier, they were moving away from it, as something that stood in their way of achievement.

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[1] With birth—death dates in parentheses ( ), the eleven R siblings are Alex (11 March1904—1 May 2005), Sam (7 September 1905—7 April 1987), Bill (14 February 1907—8 May 2005), Nancy (3 July 1908), Katherine (11 April 1910), Anne (16 October 1912), George (29 November 1914), Vera (8 November 1916—22 March 2004), Alice (24 May 1919), Margaret (20 October 1921) and Walter (13 February 1924).

[2] John R emigrated with his parents Wasyl R and Magdalena in 1898 from the village of Molodia, situated 15 kilometers southeast of Chernivtsi in Bukovyna. Theirs was a family of six children who consisted of Margaret/Martha (187?), the eldest—she had married and remained in Molodia with her husband and unfortunately all contact with her was lost, John (27 August 1875), Elizabeth (1886), Mary (1887), George (18 March 1889) and Veronica (23 March1893). The family left Chernivtsi by train for Hamburg, Germany on 10 May 1898 and arrived in Edmonton on 12 July 1898, according to niece Mary Tkachuk Lichuk in her unpublished autobiography, parts of which appear in "The Tkachuk Family: 1994 Family Reunion and Canadian Ances-Tree," assembled by Phil Tkachuk and Lillian Semeniuk, a spiral-bound unpublished manuscript, printed in Edmonton in 1996. Distributed to family members and available at the Edmonton Public Library, Edmonton, Alberta.

[3] Maria S emigrated in 1897 with her parents Ivan and Elena S and three brothers. The S family arrived in Quebec on May 2nd, 1897 on the ship, *S.S. Arcadia.* They had left their village of Chornivka, situated 15 kilometers north of the city of Chernivtsi in northern Bukovyna. In terms of current geographical usage, the village of Chornivka is in Novoselyts'kiy raion, Chernivets'ka oblast in Ukraine.

At the time of emigration, Maria (b. August 28th, 1884) was thirteen years old. Her brothers Konstantyn/Gus (18 February1888, o.s.), Alex (2 April 1892, o.s.) and Bill (2 June1894, o.s.) were with her. Another brother, Nick was born in Wostok in Canada the year of arrival, that is, 14 November 1897. However, siblings Zoiitsa (1 May1883, o.s.), Domnika (1885?), Hrehorii (30 March1887, o.s.), and Domnika (26 April 1890, o.s.) were left behind in the Chornivka cemetery having died as infants. Information about the S family in Chornivka comes from the Birth, Marriage and Death Records from the village of Chornivka, oblast archives, Chernivtsi. Permission to conduct research in these archives was granted by Dr. Roman Chmelyk, Director of the Museum of Ethnography and Crafts, L'viv, Ukraine and by Ms. Lidiia Kurylivna, Head Librarian of the oblast archives.

O.S. stands for the term "old style" and indicates that the dates are according to the Julian calendar (introduced by Julius Caesar in 46 B.C.). "Old style" dates follow the now-used dates of the Gregorian calendar by thirteen days. Thus, February 18 o.s. is February 5th in present-day (Gregorian) accounting.

[4] NE14-57-16-W.4, approximately six-and-a-half miles north of the present-day town of Andrew, Alberta.

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[5] Information about the Wasyl R and Magdalena family traveling and first settling with Magdalena's brothers and their families can be found in "The Tkachuk Family: 1994 Family Reunion and Canadian Ances-Tree."

[6] In a brief sketch of the Nicolai L family, the writer states that "In 1902 [Nicolai] he acquired his own homestead (SE24-55-15-W4) in the Soda Lake area. John R, his mining companion, took up an adjoining quarter." (NE24-55-15-W4). From *Ukrainians in Alberta*. Edmonton: Ukrainian Pioneers' Association of Alberta,1975, 394.

[7] John R and Maria S were married on the 7th of June 1903 at the Church of the Holy Trinity at Wostok, Alberta. The marriage certificate states that the two witnesses to the marriage were Konstantin Tkachuk of Wostok and Georgy Martyniwk of Wostok. The religious denomination of the officiating clergyman was Orthodox Greek Catholic, that of the bridegroom was Orthodox and that of the bride, Greek Catholic, according to the document. The bride's name was written as "Marry" and not Maria. The officiating clergyman was the Reverend M. Skibinsky. The document was registered at Fort Saskatchewan on the 13th of July 1903 with B.C. d'Easum, Registrar. Provincial Archives of Alberta, Acc. 89.440/1740.

[8] A "*burdei*" was a temporary dug-out dwelling. Most Ukrainian immigrant families that settled in rural areas spent some time living in a *burdei* or *zemlianka* (Nahachewsky 1985). It was the first structure that they built, in order to protect themselves from the elements. "The typical *burdei* had a two metre-high, inverted V-roof frame atop a rectangular pit three metres wide by four to five metres long and 3/4 to 1 1/4 metres deep. The roof and gables consisted of poplar or aspen poles and tall prairie grass and were covered with prairie sod. The *burdei* had a door in the south gable and was heated by a clay stove and furnished with homemade rail beds, tables, benches and tree stump seats. Life in a *burdei* could be extremely uncomfortable, especially for a family with three or four children" (Martynowych 1991: 80-81).

[9] Magdalena, Wasyl R's first wife and the mother of John R, his brother George and sisters Elizabeth, Mary and Veronica, died unexpectedly on the 21st of July 1905. Her death registration notes that she died of asthma. Provincial Archives Acc. 89.440/2539.

[10] When George R married on the 13th of October 1913, the John R family attended the celebration. Katherine R, three years old at the time, recalls bits of the wedding in a narrative which we will encounter later in this study.

[11] Of Wasyl R's visits, grandson Al says, " On his infrequent visits he brought bags of peanuts and candy, but otherwise paid no attention to us children. He talked with Father, sometimes in Romanian but did not talk with Mother and she did not feel kindly toward him. He would leave the same day with his horse and buggy. I was never taken to visit his home" (Alex R., 2002: 11).

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[12] In 1907, Wasyl R remarried a twice-married widow, Maria (Fegirchuk) Gordey-Ukrainetz. Of her, Alex R, Wasyl's grandson, notes that "No, I never met her. That fact [that she was a widow] was looked at as rather strange. No one [in the R family] cared about her."
Interview with Alex R, West Palm Beach, FL, 19 April 1996, p. 3.

[13] Their Homestead Grant Application was dated June 15, 1897. They applied for NE32-56-17-W4 to the north and slightly east of Wostok. The quarter section is bordered on the northwest by a long, narrow lake, Limestone Lake.

[14] Ivan S has been described as "an adventurous spirit" and as a "gypsy." By 1906, he moved Elena and his now four sons—Alex, Gus, Bill and Nick, to Colville, Washington for work opportunities in the lumber camps there. Ultimately, because of fluctuations in the economy and thus, the job market in the U.S., Ivan S moved the family back to Alberta in 1912 or 1913.

[15] Grandson Alex R says, "My eyes were fastened on my grandparents and my uncles. Their return was a godsend to us children. We had no recollection of them. They were people from a distant world….I listened to their excited talk with Mother and Father and the tales they told. They widened our horizons and enriched our humdrum lives. We stood taller with our playmates. My mother showed her pleasure—she was gayer, her step was lighter and her talk more eager. My chest swelled with pride" (Alex R., 2002: 7-8).

[16] What I refer to as a *khata*, throughout this dissertation, is described in some detail by scholars John C. Lehr and Orest T. Martynowych. Architectural historian, Lehr, notes that within five years of their arrival to rural western Canada, most Ukrainian immigrants had built "two-room, clay-plastered, whitewashed log houses with central hallways and thatched or shingled roofs" (Lehr 1976). This structure was called a *khata*.

According to Martynowych, "Such dwellings represented the most desirable form of peasant housing in Galicia and Bukovyna at the turn of the century. Besides their whitewashed exterior, they featured glossy clay floors, a clay embankment (*pryzba*) at the base of the exterior walls and a high-pitched, thatched roof with wide overlapping eaves, especially pronounced along the southern end to provide shade. The two-room interior had a central hallway (*siny*) that served as a vestibule or storage space. The all-purpose western room (*mala khata*) served as a kitchen, bedroom and living room; it was dominated by a large clay stove (*pich*) and furnished with a large bed, a table, benches and shelves. The eastern room (*velyka khata*) was reserved for formal occasions and to accommodate guests…." (Martynowych 1991: 81).

[17] According to Alex R, "When they lived with us, my grandmother was always busy, looking after their garden [the S family had been given their own garden plot], caring for her house and babysitting" (Alex R., 2002: 8).

Of the same period, Alex's brother Sam R says, "Grandmother lived with us in the early years and her job, besides taking care of the children, helping feed them and keep the crying down, was spinning the wool into yarn" (Sam R., 1982: 4).

[18] Katherine R was sent to live with Elena and Ivan S in about 1920, while they were living near St. Paul. Katherine was ten years old at the time. She recalls that, "I stayed with my grandmother in St. Paul de Métis for a couple of months, that was part of the tradition. One granddaughter went to grandmother....It seemed to me an awfully long time. I had to sleep with my grandmother and she seemed so terribly, terribly old to me and I was petrified that she'd die while I was in her bed!....Oh, I believed in witches and things....And then while I was living there, they had a door that didn't fit very well. And it would, by then, my grandmother had lost two sons....So the door would swing open and Grandmother would say that that was one of the boys. Did I get goosepimples! It never occurred to me not to think that. That it was just a superstition!"
Interview with Katherine R, Walnut Creek, CA, 28 April 1994, p. 10.

Note: By 1919, Elena S had been struck repeatedly by tragedy. She lost two babies between 1898 and 1912, her eldest son Alex disappeared in 1914, in 1918 her second son, Gus, died unexpectedly of the Spanish influenza and in 1920, Elena's third son, Bill, died of typhoid fever.

Later, Katherine's younger sister Anne was sent to live with the S grandparents. Of this, Anne says, "It's very vague in my mind....I don't think I did help her with chores....I just remember that...I slept on...it was something like the floor and I remember the creaky noises in the night. I was sure there was something coming for me all the time. I was scared. And I would say to her that there was somebody walking around up there."
Interview with Anne R, Cleveland, OH, 13 January 2003, p. 2.

[19] The peregrinations of Ivan and Elena S are somewhat remarkable and difficult to track from 1920 on. Through most of their moves, Ivan and Elena were aided by their youngest and only surviving son, Nick, and later Nick and his persevering wife, Julia. In 1920, the couple bought land at Flat Lake, near Glendon, northeast of St. Paul, Alberta. In 1922 they gave it up "being too old to do the hard work and moved to St. Paul to live with Nick, who was now running a small store there. Ivan S ran a livery stable." Genealogical notes of Alberta S, the daughter of Nick S. In the private collection of the author.

In 1928, Nick sold the store in St. Paul and bought a farm at Lafond, south of St. Paul, for himself and his parents. But in 1933, the Lafond farm failed (financially) and Ivan, Elena, Nick and his new wife, Julia, moved back in to St. Paul to operate another livery stable. Ivan S died in St. Paul on the 15th of July 1934 and was buried [no marker] in the Protestant cemetery to the west side of the town. In 1936 Elena moved with Nick and Julia to Condor, near Edmonton. In 1939, she was moved to Soda Lake to live with her daughter, Maria, but by 1940 Elena resumed life in Condor with Nick and his family, where "she lived in her own two-room 'shack' in the southwest corner of Nick and

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Julia's yard.". [Genealogical notes of Alberta S, the daughter of Nick S. In the private collection of the author.] Elena died on the 28th of November 1947 in her "shack" in Nick and Julia's backyard. She was buried in Beechmount Cemetery in Edmonton, Alberta. A marker was erected posthumously. According to her granddaughter, Alberta S., Elena spent her last days "planting her own garden, crocheting little tams for herself and sewing her own clothes by hand. She never learned to understand or speak English." (Genealogical notes of Alberta S, the daughter of Nick S. In the private collection of the author.)

[20] Alex R, Elena's eldest grandson describes her thus, "She was, on the whole, taciturn. Not really communicative. But she would express herself about flowers, about vegetation, you know, things like that."
Interview with Alex R, West Palm Beach, FL, 19 April 1996, p. 12.

[21] Katherine R maintains that " Our maternal grandmother [Elena S] was very obstinate about that. She was not going to learn any English and she never uttered a word of English….She dreamed of going back [to the Old Country] for as long as she [lived]."
Interview with Katherine R, Walnut Creek, CA, 18 September 1993, p. 3.

[22] Of Elena, her grandson George R says, "She was so religious, she didn't want to [learn]….She prayed all the time, whenever she could. It was Ukrainian Orthodox." And when asked whether Elena observed religious holidays, George R notes, "Oh, yes. She remembered them! I don't know how the Hell she did, but she had a way of remembering when the holidays would come, because that's when you didn't work!."
Interview with George R, Toronto, ON, 13 June 1996, p. 32.

[23] "During [the] first period of Ukrainian settlement (1891-1920), which peasants from Galicia and Bukovyna dominated, most female immigrants came not on their own to try their luck in a new country but as members of family units—wives, mothers, daughters, sisters….Women's dependent and minority status, together with a settlement pattern that isolated them from Canadian society, reduced their visibility" (Swyripa 1993: 21). This was certainly the situation in which Elena found herself.

[24] According to Julia S, Elena's daughter-in-law, Elena's son Nick, "was born a few months after they arrived in Canada. They arrived in May. He was born in November. But he had no birth certificate. There was no record. And so they only guess….The way they guess, you know. Each day has a holiday. And somehow, that's the way Grandma [Elena] figured out."
Interview with Julia S, Edmonton, AB, 2 May 1995, p. 1.

[25] According to Nancy R, Elena "always had water that was blessed. She'd save it from one year to another." And when her grandson burned his arm, Elena gave him a sip of the holy water.
Telephone interview with Nancy R in Calgary, AB, 25 February 2001.

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[26] Nancy R says, "There are people who can put issues together in the brain. They'll look at things and come to a conclusion, where other people don't see it at all. I think that she [Maria] had a questioning mind. Also, she had this big family and she wanted to make sure that they did not suffer the fate that people in the past had suffered. She wanted a better life for the children. So when she saw something that she felt was not fair, she'd speak out. I think she was quite bold that way."
Interview with Nancy R, Edmonton, AB, 5 May 1995, p. 3.

And of his mother's political activism, George R says, "Because Father was reeve and was involved in many things, we had newspapers and other things in the house. Mother was also interested in many things and she took part in discussion and in politics and she was school trustee. She was very involved. There were those contradictions: the men voted her as a school trustee. And there were some men who didn't think it was the right thing to do—have a woman telling them what to do."
Interview with George R, Toronto, ON, 13 June 1996, p. 31.

[27] Maria knew how to read and write in Ukrainian and later in English, and could speak and understand Ukrainian, German and ultimately, English. Her mother, Elena, never learned to read or write and, as already noted, refused to learn English. Maria's husband, John R, who does not seem to have received schooling in Molodia, seems to have gradually acquired some reading ability in English in Canada, but never with the fluency of Maria. For his part, John R could speak Ukrainian, Romanian and ultimately, English.

[28] The corporate name of the church was to be "The Ruthenian Greek Orthodox Church of St. Dymytria Soda Lake, Alberta." First, the pioneers applied to the Department of Interior, Commissioner of Dominion Land, Ottawa for a land grant to SE14-55-15-W4 on which to build a church and a place for a cemetery. They received a letter of approval on July 18, 1905. By 1908, the church interior was nearly finished and the first service was held. The cemetery served as final resting place for both of Maria R's brothers, Gus and Bill S, in 1918 and 1919, respectively.
Early Foundations: Willingdon and Area History, p. 106-107.

[29] Alex R writes of Maria and the post office. "Federal authorities in Ottawa approved the establishment of Soda Lake Post Office in August 1903, as a result of a petition initiated by Mr. B [a neighbor]. In 1907, Father, a Liberal party supporter was appointed postmaster by the Liberal administration. Mother actually performed the duties of postmaster since Father didn't have the time, nor could he read or write….The government extended the telephone line from Vegreville to Shandro, about 15 miles north of us, in 1906 or 1907, and made a connection to our home in 1911. We were the only Ukrainian family in the district with a phone and became the resource for neighbors who needed to make urgent calls, usually to Vegreville, to a doctor, or for critically needed repairs for equipment. By virtue of the post office and the phone, we became a kind of central intelligence center" (Alex R., 2002: 40).
[Alex neglects to note that the reason that the phone was installed in the R household, was precisely because it was the community's post office.]

Sam R writes of Maria's postmistress experience. "Since Mother was the only resident of the community who was fluent in both English and Ukrainian, the Soda Lake post office was established in our home. Father was designated as postmaster, but Mother actually did the work, and the post office was set up in a corner of her kitchen....One of our problems was that people frequently came for their mail just as we were sitting down to eat, and custom and courtesy required us to invite them to have lunch or dinner with us. We boys had hearty appetites and we did not appreciate having to share our meals, and Mother did not enjoy all this extra work" (Sam R., 1982: 13).

[30] *Pruth Forty Years of Memories: History of Pruth School S.D. 2064 in Word and Pictures*, Ed. Nick Gushaty. Edmonton, AB: Priority Printing Ltd., 1990, p. 14.

Alex R states that "my father was elected the first Chairman of the Board of School Trustees. I felt proud that he should have this honor. I felt that we, his children, were a little special and held my head higher" (Alex R., 2002: 48).
The official history of Pruth School suggests that there was no clear Chairman of the Board, but simply a group of trustees. Nevertheless, according to Alex R, his father was "Chairman of the Board."

[31] According to her son Bill, "Mother was the first...Ukrainian [school board] trustee...she went to the convention in Lethbridge. At that time, the provincial government was trying to eliminate these small schools. They were trying to organize large school districts, so that there would be secondary schools. And Mother went to Lethbridge."
Interview with Bill R, Surrey, B.C., 15 July 1994, p. 20.

And according to her daughter Nancy R, "When she [Maria] became a trustee—I'll tell you how it happened. There was a school meeting. And there were these trustees discussing...and something that they said, she responded, 'I don't agree with that! This is the way it should be.' And one of the trustees replied, 'if you are so smart, why don't you go to the convention and bring it up?' She said, 'sure I will, if you nominate me.' They nominated her."
Interview with Nancy R, Edmonton, AB, 5 May 1995, p. 3.

[32] The Pruth Community Hall, initially and officially called the "Yuriy Fedkowych Ukrainian Educational Society of Soda Lake," was established on February 12, 1921 by forty-four resolute community members in the home of Oleksa Tkachuk. Tkachuk was a homesteader in the Soda Lake/Pruth Ukrainian bloc settlement. Ukrainian immigrants primarily from villages in Bukovyna lived in this area. Pruth, the local name of the district, received its name from the *Prut'* River which flows through the former Bukovyna.

The inspiration for this assembly came not only from district farmers, but also from two priests, Father Lazar German and Father John Kusey, who were organizing Ukrainian

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Greek-Orthodox church parishes among Canadian-Ukrainians. During the meeting, both priests spoke to those gathered and "to all Ukrainians in Canada, explaining why and how to organize national homes....The speech of the second speaker, Rev. Father John Kusey, awakened to national consciousness the lethargic Ukrainians of Soda Lake, and he too was applauded." At the meeting's conclusion, the Ukrainian national anthem was sung. Thus, the Soda Lake/Pruth community established an educational-cultural society, a *chytalnia* [reading society].

By May 23, 1921, members decided that an actual building needed to be built to accommodate the increasingly popular programs. A notice, prepared and signed by Elia Tkachuk, Society treasurer, was posted around the settlement area. The notice read,

> "The Honourable Public are hereby advised that a meeting will be held at the home of Oleksa Tkachuk, May 29, 1921, at 1:00 o'clock p.m. in the matter of building a permanent *chytalnia* and selecting a site therefor. Members who do not attend the meeting shall have no right to criticize."[32]

Pruth Hall was completed in 1922. Constructed for approximately $2000, the hall was built on a donation of two acres of land on the S.E. corner of Section 15, Township 55, Range 15.
(Excerpted from "Yuriy Fedkowych Ukrainian Educational Society of Soda Lake Proscenium Screen," seminar paper by Monica F.K. Jensen, 8 December 2000, Bohdan Medwidsky Ukrainian Folklore Archives in the Ukrainian Folklore Centre at the University of Alberta, Accession Number 2000.123.)

According to Nancy R, not only was Maria active in establishing the community hall, she was also active in its programs. As an actress for community hall plays, Maria was quite good at playing "the evil step-mother." "She liked that role," Nancy says. "It suited her and she could be pretty mean to the family, to the children and that. I used to sit there crying....Yes, I used to feel so sorry for the little children, you know. Believe me, for what I understood then, she was not a bad actress."
Interview with Nancy R, Edmonton, AB, 26 May 1995, #082-056/B on tape.

[33] *Early Foundations: Willingdon and Area History*, p. 107-108.

[34] Of Maria, Nancy R notes, "Mother used to say, 'we left Europe because of the military and because of the church.' The women were always looked down upon. The women did the work; the men went to the *korchma* and drank beer. She [Maria] said about the church, 'Look, the priest does nothing all week and the people cannot read and write. My mother [Elena] doesn't know money [the values of various coins and bills] except by the look of it! They [the priests] should have had courses for seniors.' My mother [Maria] used to talk like that and this was seventy or eighty years ago. She was thinking of those things. She was way ahead [of her time]."
Interview with Nancy R, Edmonton, AB, 2 May 1995, p. 2.

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[35] In Chornivka, a *korchma* was a village pub, a tavern.

[36] A younger cousin, Ruth, related the shock of Maria's aunt-in-law, Axenia T, who went to Maria's home near Limestone Lake (Wostok area) on her wedding day to help Maria prepare for the wedding. "I haven't seen a house so empty. Nothing was in," Axenia said to Ruth. The allusion was to a strikingly threadbare *khata*. Axenia was reacting to the fact that even by the standards of relative deprivation suffered by Ukrainian-Canadian pioneers, Maria's situation was unique.
Interview with Ruth T, Edmonton, AB, 18 July 1997.

Katherine and the Genesis of this Dissertation

Katherine's personal narratives were the impetus behind this dissertation, and she was the first among the eight women whom I interviewed for this dissertation. Long before I thought to pursue an academic degree, I was fascinated in particular by Katherine's vivid narratives. From my earliest recollection, at family dinners where she was present, the voices of her other sisters would fall away as Katherine talked about her life as a child in the Ukrainian-Canadian community[1] of Soda Lake. In the spring of 1994 I asked her if we might talk about family heritage. At the time, Katherine, then 84 years old, and her equally octogenarian husband lived a mere fifteen miles away from me in the San Francisco Bay area.

Katherine was delighted for the distraction of a niece's visit and was eager to talk about her experiences growing up on the homestead in Alberta. She knew she was a good conversationalist and storyteller and had great confidence in her ability to recall certain key events in her past. And so, for a series of long, delicious afternoons in April and May, I drove to her Rossmoor condominium-apartment with my maps, photographs, notes and a tape recorder and we talked. I had nothing more in mind than to record what bits of family recollections Katherine could share.

When our interview sessions began, I had yet to focus on any specific subject and I asked Katherine simply for her early memories. It turned out that the memories about which she chose to speak were about rites of passage—the christening rituals, her uncle's and her sister's wedding, an uncle's funeral, and about various calendar rituals: Christmas, Easter and *Zeleni Sviata*. Our talks would last for one, sometimes two hours; whereupon Katherine would tire and her voice would begin to fail. But always, in both our minds there was more to cover, and so, I returned and returned to sit at Katherine's feet and listen to her recounting of R family stories. In all, I interviewed Katherine six times.

Interviewing Katherine taught me much about my interrogative technique, for example, how not to interrupt and when a well-timed question might open a new window or door. She worked closely with me to get the sense of a situation right, according to her lights.

Katherine also made me aware of how she and indeed all of the R and K sisters were and are "active and self-conscious narrators of their own lives" (Prell 1989: 251). Myerhoff,[2] in her interviews with a group of elders, turn-of-the-century immigrants from eastern Europe now living in Los Angeles, realized that she herself "was an interpreter of conflict, ritual and stories in the lives of the elderly [her interviewees]. But so too were the elderly…as they reviewed their lives and continued to play them out against a variety of cultural stories" (Prell 1989: 251). In the same sense, Katherine was entirely aware of herself sharing her narratives with me. She consciously crafted her narratives to reflect not only her memories of the past, but also to show how she feels about the past then and now, and to communicate what she wished for me to conclude from all of this.

Related to the interview process taking place between Katherine and me, ethnographer-anthropologist Shostak asks a germane question: "how dependent is a personal narrative on a particular interviewing relationship?" (Shostak 1989 231). She answers the question by recalling a lecture by one of her mentors.

> Vincent Crapanzano noted that personal narratives do not exist independently of the collaborative process involved in their collection. People's stories are not in final form, shape and content, waiting patiently for a glorified mechanic…to open their 'verbal tap,' allowing the preformed story to escape. Instead, an interview is an interaction between two people: one, with unique personality traits and interests at a particular time of life, answers a specific set of questions asked by another person with unique personality traits and interests at a particular time of life. (Shostak 1989 231-232)

I have no illusions that Katherine's or any of the R or K sisters' narratives are true in any absolute sense, nevertheless they do reflect what each of these sisters wanted to communicate at this particular time of their lives.

Katherine is responsible for the framework of this dissertation. Because she had introduced narratives regarding rites of passage and calendar rituals, rituals that her family had observed, I realized that Katherine's other sisters might have narratives that clustered around these subjects. When in 1995, I decided to interview the eldest R sister, 87 year old Nancy, and flew to Edmonton to do so, I noted how she, too, focused on rites of passage and calendar rituals.

Probing in the area of family ritual observance, I continued to interview the R sisters after I had begun formal studies in Ukrainian folklore at the University of Alberta. The focus on rites of passage and calendar rituals crystallized after 1999 in discussions with two of my faculty advisors at the University of Alberta, Dr. Andriy Nahachewsky and Dr. Bohdan Medwidsky. As I studied the literature of personal narratives, I realized that the narratives I was collecting were revelatory documentation of many aspects of family identity, in this case, my own. At this time, I expanded my interview subjects to include the K sisters, a group similar in age and background to the Rs, but on my father's side of the family.

Serendipitously, it all began with Katherine, who is ninety-five as of this writing. Katherine's memory is excellent. She speaks articulately and poetically about her remembered past. She is exacting and diffident, clear about what she wants to say and how she wants to say it. Accustomed to being in charge of things, Katherine's is a commanding presence. As I noted elsewhere, she quickly assumed the role of leading the direction of our interviews, for in her mind, one thing followed another in a particular way. If my questions got in the path of her logic, she gently dismissed them and continued on with the way she had taken.

A Note About Katherine

A self-styled and accomplished artist, Katherine has studied painting and has tried her hand at sculpting. She has designed and built furniture. She is keenly interested in the colors, patterns, and textures of objects, whether art or everyday objects, and was probably the first to direct my attention to the beautiful weaving of the Ukrainian *poiasy* in our family's collection. Katherine interacted with these pieces as art objects. Hers is an inquisitive and expansive mind.

As masterful wordsmith, Katherine composes graceful sentences and chooses her vocabulary carefully. Whatever she emphasizes, she has thought-out beforehand. Her narratives are the most beautifully crafted narratives in this study. It is possible that I interviewed Katherine repeatedly in part because I simply loved the beauty of her narratives. Thus, the artistic dimension of Katherine's narratives may have influenced me, quite unconsciously, to favor the inclusion of more of them in this study, although I certainly tried to avoid any sort of favoritism. [Audience-performer dynamic.] In the R family of six girls and five boys, Katherine is the second eldest female and the fifth child in the succession of eleven. In her narratives, she demonstrates great confidence in her ability to describe the R family in the early days of their life on the northern great plains.

Personal Narrative: Katherine (Rite of Passage: Birth) #1

We shall begin with the rites of passage that Katherine introduced in her various narratives: birth, marriage and death.[3] With regard to birth, this initial narrative from 1994 addresses the occasion when her mother brought a new infant to church to be christened.

> 14 May 1994/Walnut Creek, p. 11—After the birth of a child[4]
> KR: I didn't tell you one story that moved me a lot. Babies, one after another. And I remember, particularly, my mother, coming to church after one of the babies was born. We were in church already, but my mother had to stay in the vestibule with the baby! Because the baby was proof of sin and she had to be absolved before she could enter the church.
>
> *MJ: But she'd already had all these other babies! But it didn't matter?*
>
> KR: She sinned once more. I remember resenting it very much. I was very angry. I felt they were being cruel. I didn't really understand.....As a child, I also resented the screen in the church. Only the men could go behind the screen. The women were too sinful.

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Katherine makes three key points here: one, that babies were a regular event, "one after another," that she cannot recall which child is being baptized, and that the church did not treat women fairly. It is not the ritual gestures in church around the christening of an infant that come to mind for Katherine. Instead, it is the feelings of anger and the resulting sense of injustice. These are feelings that Katherine carried with her from childhood all her life. She observes that her mother is isolated from the rest of the family,[5] forced to wait in the vestibule (the enclosed porch) of the small pioneer church, until the priest absolved her from her "sin" at the conclusion of the regular service. According to Katherine, the idea of this "sin" comes from the fact that the new mother "is considered to be unclean after the birth," and thus in the eyes of the church must be cleansed. The new mother is barred from returning to the churchly fold until she has been "purified" or blessed (Kozholianko 2001: 59; Kubijovyc 1963: 335).

The girl-Katherine identifies with her mother and expands this identification to the plight of Ukrainian-Canadian women in general. Those who segregated the new mothers from the rest of the religious community "were cruel," to Katherine's reckoning. Katherine could not understand how they could be forced away from their families for some unintelligible and abstract concept such as sin. In her narrative, Katherine seems to mix her child-self attitudes with her adult-self attitudes, in a sense "retrofitting" her memories. In all likelihood, as a child, she was upset to see her mother seated apart and waiting in the cold church vestibule. But the imposition of the idea of "sin" must have come later to Katherine and actually diverged from the church's position: the church thought a woman who had just given birth was unclean.[6] It was not a matter of the woman having sinned.

Katherine expresses further animus regarding the church, as a curious and seeking child, probably like any other child, Katherine wanted to find out what was behind the altar screen, the iconostasis, in the church. But because she was a girl-child, she was not allowed to go there: "only the men could go behind the screen." This, too, she resented as being unfair.

But Katherine has begun her narrative with a second theme in mind as well: the burden of so many children on a mother—"Babies, one after another." As a child, she might have been aware of the plethora of babies and young children in the homes of her mother and the neighbor women[7], but the young Katherine would not have appreciated the full impact of so many births for a women, not until much later as an adult. As a result, rather than showing delight in the details of the Orthodox christening ritual, Katherine seems to imply that just below the surface of the ritual lies an injustice: the women are overly burdened, psychologically and physically. We will see in later narratives that Katherine loves the color and the ceremony of ritual observance, but the underlying meaning of the ceremony, the necessity of a particular ritual practice, she will question. Why, according to Katherine, should a rite of passage ritual, such as a christening, involve a mother's having to be absolved of the carnal sin that precipitated her becoming a mother? Is this not absurd and hurtful to Katherine? Thus, for Katherine, the christening ritual is suspect because it seems to translate into men being cruel to women, excluding them and shaming them. We will see, in the next section, that Katherine's sister Nancy shares her belief that the christening ritual is unfair to women like their mother.

Personal Narrative: Katherine (Rite of Passage: Birth) #2

Six years later in the year 2000, Katherine and I revisited the subject of the birth of a child and of the ritual acceptance of an infant into the Orthodox religious community. By this time, having become more informed about Ukrainian-Canadian christening practice, I questioned Katherine more closely with regard to how deeply ritual observance penetrated the R family regimen. In her narrative she recalls how her mother was giving birth to another little R in the upstairs bedroom, while the threshing crew, downstairs having a meal, was aware of and "respectful of" the proceedings upstairs.

> 31 August 2000, tape index (#057-162)—After the birth of a child
> KR: They [the threshing crew] were downstairs and they were very respectful of what was going on.
>
> *MJ: So either the midwife or Mrs. L [the nearest neighbor] was upstairs helping your mother…and the threshing crew was downstairs.*
>
> KR: Yes. And I remember…and we children, too…I don't remember that I knew what was going on. I must have been quite young. But I heard my mother cry out. And a little while later, I heard the baby. So then we knew.
>
> *MJ: To you your recollection there wasn't any ritual thing that she did…other than having the child baptized or having godparents for the child…she would take the child to the church…can you describe any of that?*

KR: That wasn't the first thing that happened. She'd have to wait, maybe 'til spring if it was winter, 'til it was warmer…and take the child to the church and probably all of us little ones, because I remember very well what impression I got. She had to take the baby, and they had these *kyzhiki*, sheepskin, beautiful sheepskin coats that were voluminous.[8] She'd have the baby like this [she gestures to show how the baby would be cradled in a crook of the mother's arm held under the coat panel] and [the *kyzhiky*] wrapped around herself. And she had to stay in that cold, unheated vestibule, all through the ceremony. And when it [the service] was all finished, the priest would go into the vestibule and confess her and forgive her…since she, had obviously…she sinned because she was having a baby…the man wasn't sinful, but the woman was sinful. She couldn't come into the church 'til she was forgiven by the priest and blessed. That's the way they blessed the baby.

MJ: Did she comment on that to you?…

KR: No. But I remember that, because I was very angry….so that I was old enough…that *she* had to be out there [in the vestibule], and the rest of us were in the church. I didn't think about it….religion. It was a sin, an original sin…like the Catholics have an original sin. I have always sort of harbored that feeling, never forgotten it.

MJ: For any of the children, did she have godparents?.

KR: Oh yes, but that was a different thing…separately.

MJ: Before the church service...having the godparents?

KR: Not before. Sometimes during…probably towards at the end. She would have held the baby and then, you see, Godparents would stand in front of the priest and they'd take the baby and…but we didn't have a font or anything of this sort.

MJ: But what about gifts? Were there gifts brought for the baby? No cloth…

KR: No. They were barely scrabbling for a livelihood at that time, the pioneers, new settlers in Canada.

MJ: So you don't remember godparents coming with gifts of cloth or anything of that sort?

KR: They were supposed to *be* godparents. On the day of your birth they were supposed to come and bring you something. But not to the christening.

MJ: Did the christening take place at the church or in the home, or did it matter....

KR: The church. I think it mattered, because it was at the church. They'd wait 'til the weather changed or 'til they could have the priest…'cause the priest was a priest for a number of churches.

MJ: Do you remember going to a christening at the first pioneer church?

KR: Yes….That original church [St. Demitrius Ruthenian Greek Orthodox Church of Luzan], which is quite elaborate. When we entered the church, the men stood on the right side and the women on the left side, and the choir, which was all men, had a slightly raised place where they stood.… Mr. L. was leading [the choir] in a nice tenor voice. He was the *diak* [cantor]. He knew where to join in and so on.…We had a screen, what is that called…[the iconostasis]…anyhow… we…women were not…And the priest would, every once in a while, disappear behind that very elaborate, gold-painted… and all that. And in spring when they were trying to refurbish the interior, the men had to scrub the floor or whatever there. Women could not go behind [this screen]. They were too sinful.

MJ: That also made an impression on you. Was there any particular way that the baby would be dressed for a christening?

KR: No. They didn't "dress" the baby in anything until the baby wanted to crawl. It was more-or-less diapered. When the baby would begin to get a little independent, they'd manage some sort of a shirt or something. There was nothing special about it. Whatever they had…

MJ: After the baby was born, did your mother or any of the other women sing special songs after the birth of a baby? Or was there anything [any custom] about visiting…to see the baby?

KR: No. I certainly didn't think they came visiting. Especially if it were at a time when it was very difficult, when there was snow…or something like that. No. They didn't make a special deal out of it [the birth of a baby]. They had babies all over the place. [She laughs]

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In this second birth narrative, the magic of birth and the utter commonness of it are both minor themes. It is as if everyone in the house held their breath for a moment, until they heard the baby cry. The men who had come to harvest were inadvertently caught up in the event and showed "respect." Thus, the natural event accords the new mother a high place among those around her. This is in direct contrast to the new mother's initial reception to the church, which Katherine covers a few moments later.

By now, Katherine is a practiced informant: we've been working together with her memories of family events for six years. She, herself, loves the telling detail and knows that to my way of thinking, the more detail, the better. I have asked her to talk about what happens once the child has been taken to church. But no. For Katherine, the event begins before that, and so she explains how a mother sometimes had to wait with her infant "'til it was warmer." The severe cold and deep snows of winter mitigated against taking a vulnerable infant out into the elements. The baby's other siblings had to be considered as well, for they were likely to have attended the christening event. Indeed, Katherine testifies that as a child, she was one of the "little ones" who were in church to observe a christening for a brother or a sister. Katherine could also have noted that because of the difficult winter conditions and because the priests who officiated at the small Orthodox and [Uniate] Catholic churches were essentially circuit riders, the priest's visitations were intermittent in nature. Services would be held when the priest was available. Later in the narrative, Katherine alludes to this: "They'd wait 'til the weather changed or 'til they could have the priest…'cause the priest was a priest for a number of churches."

Katherine reintroduces the theme of a mother humiliated by a carefully observed ritual: because she has sinned, she is shunned from the church community—"she couldn't come into the church"— until the priest forgives and blesses her, welcoming her back into the group. And as if to answer an unexpressed question—what is the ritual for blessing an unbaptized infant?— Katherine summarizes the ritual dismissively: "That's the way they blessed the baby." She has little patience for this ritualistically lop-sided treatment of women.

But on her way to her condemnation of the tradition and the ritual that singled out new mothers as sinners, Katherine pauses to praise maternal practicality, cleverness and creativity. The sheepskin coats, *kozhukhy*, that some Ukrainian-Canadian women wore in the cold months were marvelously suited to protect and warm an infant. She remembers exactly just how, in that "cold, unheated vestibule," an infant was held, to best advantage, under the mother's roomy coat. Furthermore, these *kozhukhy* were beautiful, the outer smooth side of the sheepskin embellished by decorative leather plackets and stitchwork.

Katherine warms to the image of the colorful coat her mother would have worn for reasons of practicality, tradition and grace. In this, Katherine infers that the women stood with pride.

On the other hand, Katherine carries her pique for the unfairness of the stigma of pregnancy, to the present: "I have always sort of harbored that feeling, never forgotten it." The anger also seems to be attached to the manner in which women are excluded, that the ritual in its proper practice calls for the exclusion of women at certain junctures. And six years after she has first mentioned it, Katherine reiterates how women are not allowed behind the screen in church: according to her, they are too sinful. As for religion, when she was a child, she now admits, she did not think about it. She merely accepted the belief that pregnancy "it was a sin, an original sin…like the Catholics have an original sin."

Katherine knows the ritual steps of the christening service: where people stand, what they are supposed to do (their roles). When it comes to form, Katherine knows and remembers it. She demonstrates this not only in regard to the christening ceremony, but also with regards to the pioneer church. When one entered the church she tells us, the men stood to the right, the women to the left, and the choir stood on a "slightly raised place." She recalls the excellence of the *dyak*'s voice, part of this excellence hinging on the fact that "He knew where to join in." For Katherine, it is a positive attribute that the *dyak* knew the form, and carried out his role in a ritualistically appropriate manner.

When queried about the presence of godparents at a child's christening, Katherine knows immediately how to describe their role in the ritual ceremony—they take the child from the parent(s) and hand it to the priest, but she is quick to point out that godparents are an entirely different part of the ritual. Again, Katherine seems to appreciate the formulaic patterns of ritual, that is, with regards to the christening, she clearly visualizes the various parts or steps which are taken to complete the ceremony, the godparents being one among a series of chapters in the ritual book called a christening.

When pressed for more details about godparent-activity, Katherine responds in some frustration: "They were supposed to *be* godparents." In other words, Ukrainian-Canadian godparents were there to be actively involved in a child's life, guiding, offering support. Where did she learn and develop this sense of ritual propriety, that is, what godparents were supposed to do? Someone taught her or she observed what was ritualistically expected of those who participated, who were part of the ritual community. Katherine continues: gifts for the infant or for the mother and infant, were insubstantial to nonexistent—in a pioneer community, no one had much to give. To Katherine's way of thinking, a gift was something spiritual that godparents were required to supply. Perhaps small gifts, gifts of food, were passed to the parents and the newborn from godparents, other relatives, and neighbors, but because Katherine develops her narrative to make a point—the spiritual importance of godparents and the limited means of the pioneer community—Katherine keeps the area of gifts for the infant in shadow.

One could argue that Katherine has developed an anti-patriarchal theme in the two preceding narratives. The men in the religious community had special privileges: they could go behind the screen. Men were not ritualistically shunned for their role in the birth of a child: "the man wasn't sinful, but the woman was sinful." With his authority, the priest could separate a mother [in the vestibule] from her children [in the church proper]. But I would argue that in her narratives, Katherine communicates an anti-ritual sentiment. Why do something if it is absurd, useless and potentially hurtful? She doesn't think it makes sense. If a ritual act serves no useful purpose, then abandon it. This seems to be Katherine's stated position.

Personal Narrative: Katherine (Rite of Passage: Marriage) #1

Two weddings form a memorable portion of Katherine's narratives. Her first wedding narrative,[9] she maintains, is from her earliest days when she was a toddler. It is Katherine's Uncle George, the younger brother of Katherine's father, for whom the guests have gathered.

14 May 1994/Walnut Creek, p. 6-7—Uncle George's wedding

KR: Another of my earlier memories was my Uncle George's wedding.[10] It was, of course, on another farm.

MJ: And who was Uncle George?

KR: My Father's brother. He was such a nice man. He eventually died of cancer. And he's got sons and daughters, if you ever wanted to meet those. They were your parents' cousins…

MJ: Tell me what you remember of this wedding.

KR: Well, there was a b[arn], a granary. We used kerosene lamps. We didn't even have these Aladdin lamps. We had just ordinary kerosene lamps. It was evening. They had a house, at the time, it was like this one [She refers to the family photo of the homestead buildings, in which the 1905-06 *khata* appears.]. There was a bed there. And I was on the bed…in the house. I was walking around it. And I was yelling for my mother. And they kept feeding me prunes.

MJ: Why? Because they thought they were healthy for you?

KR: No. Because prunes were a treat. And I didn't really want them, but I ate them. And I kept yelling and crying for my mother. And I got out of the house somehow. I don't know. They were preparing food, too, in the other room. Someone just overlooked me, I know. I got out of the house and it was pitch-black. And I was still crying and yelling. I heard the noise in the granary where they were dancing and all that. But I also heard the real deep rumble of pigs grunting. And I was petrified. I was terrified. I didn't know where the pigs were and where I was going. Somehow somebody found me and took me to my mother. But, you know, some of those memories never leave you because you're so keen at the time.

MJ: Was she [your mother] dancing at the time?

KR: No. I remember she was sitting. She was keeping an eye on my father, because she thought he was a little bit inebriated. Some of those weddings ended up in big battles! Oh, yes! As a matter of fact, they would fight at times, when…when one guy would let it be known that such-and-such a girl was his girl and he was going to marry her. And some other young buck took exception to that and they'd go to a dance and they'd fight it out.

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In many ways, this narrative by Katherine is about Katherine. If it had a theme, it could be called "how I overcame adversity" or "when I was a brave little girl." In a presenting sense, this is a narrative of self-constitution. In it the child-Katherine does not want to be held a prisoner on a bed, being fed placatory prunes while her mother is somewhere else among wedding guests. She "yells" for her mother: she does not whimper, whine or cry tearfully. Katherine's choice of the word "yell" is conscious and connotes the meaning she wishes to convey. She is shouting from an imagined position of strength. The child manages to escape while being momentarily "overlooked." However, with her freedom, Katherine is visited by terror. She is lost. Although she hears the dancing, which she knows is taking place in the granary, she also senses the presence of the pigs. It is "pitch-black" and the pigs are a real danger. This, Katherine has the presence of mind to know. She manages to hold out until someone finds her and takes her to her mother. Danger has been averted.

On another level, Katherine relates to ritual. Uncle George's wedding is, of course, an event for the family. It is an event for Katherine personally. Quite offhandedly, she captures some of the customary details of a Ukrainian-Canadian wedding. In one room of the *khata*, people—probably the women of the community—are preparing food. Guests are dancing or watching the dancing in the granary. Some of them are drinking as well. The chances of a fight breaking out are not remote. Katherine's fine eye for detail helps to fill out the scene. Kerosene lamps are used to light the *khata* and the granary. Prunes or dried plums have been brought to the festivities and are considered a delicacy, fit to mollify a child. Her mother is keeping an eye on her father "because she thought he was a little bit inebriated" and "some of those weddings ended up in big battles!" In some semblance of care and nurturing, wives are looking out for husbands and neighbors are rescuing wandering children.

On one hand, Katherine's narrative presents a romantic view of Katherine: a determined child, able to weather her terror to achieve her goal. There is no mention of her mother's possibly chastising her for escaping and getting lost. On the other hand, Uncle George's wedding, is an unromantic narrative. From a child's perspective, which Katherine presents as an adult, the wedding is irritating, inconvenient, suddenly terrifying, amusing and comforting. The child seems to understand that she is a part of this somewhat distracted community of elders.

Personal Narrative: Katherine (Rite of Passage: Marriage) #2

Katherine's second wedding narrative presents the wedding of her sister, Nancy, the eldest girl in the R family. Nancy's was the first wedding[11] of the second generation of the R clan, and the only Bukovynian-Canadian wedding—that is, a wedding reflecting the cultural heritage of the R family—to take place thereafter among the R sisters. At the time of Nancy's marriage on July 14th, 1926, the family, less the eldest son who had left home to find his way in the world, was still together, living on the homestead next to Soda Lake. As the eldest girl—she had just turned 19 on July 3rd, Nancy preceded her siblings in marriage. Marriage is an important individual and collective rite of passage. Nancy's brothers married later and away from family and community, as did Nancy's two younger sisters who elected to have small civil ceremonies. Of the six R girls, only three married—Nancy, Katherine and Vera, three did not—Anne, Alice and Margaret. Among the three who married, unions were lifelong. At the time of Nancy's wedding, Katherine was sixteen years old.

In a general sense, personal narratives about weddings can be expected to reveal details large and small about the nature of love and bonding among families. The personal narratives about the "First Wedding" in the R family are no exception. They are as much about family identity, as they are about the bride, the groom or the wedding itself. Katherine, Nancy and Alice all have narratives about Nancy's wedding.

Nancy's wedding is significantly both the first and last effort by the Rs as an immigrant family to abide by Old Country rules in a wedding. Only Katherine sees something and reveals it in her narrative about the "First Wedding." What Katherine is able to discern, in part, is Old World beauty hiding in the attempt to be modern.

> 5 May 1994—Sister Nancy's wedding
> KR: Like Nancy's [wedding] was in spring, and we would take young *tipolya*, [*topolia*] what do you call it? I suppose it was Quaking Aspen...
>
> *MJ: And what was the word you just used in Ukrainian?*

KR: *Tipolya*, Quaking Aspen, and cut them down and tied them on the gates. And then, of course, we didn't invite, formally, people, because everyone is welcome. The two trees meant that they were welcome, for everyone. So then my father, I don't know who else, my uncles must have been [dead by then]...maybe my Uncle Nick, he was alive, maybe he helped him. They built an outdoor dance floor. And then, the neighbor women came and helped my mother cook up a feast. There was a band and there was a lot of dancing. Of course, first there was church...where the marriage took place.

KR: My sis[ter]... Nancy and I went to Edmonton and got a wedding gown for her.

MJ: Like a white gown?

KR: Yes. And a veil, New World. But I had been to church, to weddings that were still Old World. And they had these beautiful embroidered clothing and *choboty*, boots, *choboty*. And they had a wreath of flowers. And from the wreath they hung all colors of ribbons, maybe an inch and a half wide, but very colorful.

[MJ and Katherine look at photographs of a Ukrainian wedding party.] ...

KR: Well, you see, she [the woman in the photograph] probably has a sheepskin coat....You see the wool there. And what she's got on her head? It just seems like wraps...and you know, I remember seeing my Mother in the neighborhood when we went to something...and she always had a shawl on her head. And I never realized that she had to, that was a symbol of being married.

KR: [Still looking at the photos of a Ukrainian wedding party] Now you see this one has a Ukrainian blouse, embroidery and probably coral (*korali*)...I remember necklaces of coins...

MJ: Tell me about Nancy's wedding. You went into Edmonton...

KR: First of all, we went into Edmonton with the groom, John, and [his friend] the local... he was a teacher there, [Mr.] S., but he was married. And he went and I went. And we went into a jewelry store and John bought Nancy a diamond...a ring...she got an engagement ring...and that was not Ukrainian. And we were coming back, we sat in the back, and John had a car...and Mr. S. kept pawing at me. He was married. It was very unpleasant. I didn't *dare* say anything to Nancy and John. The church. I don't remember the ceremony.

MJ: Was it a morning or an evening ceremony?

KR: Morning. And when that was finished...I know they still had —[during part of the church service there was a Ukrainian phrase, which Katherine translates

> as—"Be afraid of your husband."] And if you remember Peter the Great [of Russia]? The groom also had a whip. And it was Peter the Great, I don't know if he cut out the language of the ceremony, who said, "you kiss your bride, you don't whip her"...
>
> *MJ: We were talking about Nancy's wedding.*
>
> KR: Well, John...John's home was about 28 or 30 miles from ours. So this [a traditional Ukrainian wedding] couldn't be the kind of a wedding that took place. From the church, they went to the bride's home and they feasted and danced, and after that, in the evening, they went to the groom's place. And they feasted some more and they danced some more [all this at a traditional Ukrainian wedding]. Well we couldn't do that with Nancy's. It was just too far. So, I do know that they [the groom's parents] did have some sort of a celebration, because I remember Nancy talking about that.

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Katherine begins her narrative on a romantic note. To her recollection, the first wedding in the family, has taken place in spring.,[12] This idea of spring-wedding-season is a later addition, coming from the adult Katherine. Traditionally, Ukrainian weddings took place after the harvest was in during the lull in farming activity or after midwinter and before Lent—approximately from November through March.[13] The idea of a spring wedding comes to Katherine from other cultural currents.

The next detail Katherine introduces, and here she uses a Ukrainian word—*topolia*, are the fresh-cut quaking aspen branches tied, a branch on each side, to the farm gate. The fact that Katherine uses a Ukrainian term for the greens is startling. She is not in the habit of doing so. Two years after Nancy's wedding, Katherine left Soda Lake (1928) and Canada for good. She settled and ultimately married in the Chicago area, adopting her husband's German family traditions. There were no people of Ukrainian-Canadian extraction around her, none that she sought out. Gradually, Katherine lost the thread of Ukrainian-Canadian ritual observance. There was no compelling reason for her to maintain it. She rarely heard the Ukrainian language spoken, (it was not spoken at home) nor spoke it herself. When there were family dinners in which some of her brothers and sisters would be present, family stories might be shared, but the Ukrainian language was never used. Only the names for certain Ukrainian food dishes—*holubtsi, pyrohy,* *nachynka*—would be mentioned with easy familiarity. Thus, years after it has fallen out of use, Katherine's "*topolia*" is striking. It reveals Katherine's continuing connection to aspects of Ukrainian-Canadian culture, which she absorbed as a child.

Not only does Katherine remember the traditional wedding custom of tying green branches to the gates, she knows what this gesture signifies—"The two trees meant that they [the community] were welcome...." She delights and revels in the now-unimaginable expansiveness of the gesture. The branches went up and everyone knew they were invited to a wedding celebration. Assuming the role of "educator," to the interviewer's "student," Katherine also interprets and explains—as if saying, "this is how we Ukrainians did things. We invited everybody." There is a kind of exclusionary pride at work here—"we" did this and others did things other ways.

For Katherine, the remembered past is clear: her family tied the *topolia* to the homestead gates, the men collectively built an outdoor dance floor, neighbor women helped her mother cook a feast. Katherine paints a fuller picture [than her sisters, most notably Nancy] of the R family's working cooperatively among themselves and with neighbors to host this semi-traditional Ukrainian wedding. She makes the listener aware of the web of family and community connections that enable the work to go forward on wedding preparations. One can imagine a moment of family warmth in all of this, with Katherine's father and her uncle working together.

Like the men, Katherine and Nancy collaborate to shop for a wedding gown for the bride-to-be. By this time, Katherine has become the seamstress in the family and is deferred to in matters of cut and style. She has developed an abiding interest in fashion and fabric, which will continue long into her years as an adult. She probably would remember, with some pleasure, finding just the dress for her sister. For her part, Nancy would want this "expert" with her in the matter of selecting the right dress. She would be relieved that an important decision had been shared. It is understandable for Katherine to remember and bring up this detail—"Nancy and I went to Edmonton and got a wedding gown for her."

The fact that an English-style white wedding dress with a veil is Nancy's costume is consistent with the R family's drive to be progressive and modern.

While noting that Nancy chooses a New World wedding dress, as opposed to an embroidered white linen Ukrainian costume embellished by a floral-wreath headdress, Katherine begins a digression about the beauty of a traditional Ukrainian-Canadian wedding, the embroidered clothing, the boots, the [bride's] wreath of flowers and ribbons, necklaces of coral and of coins. She recalls having been present at "Old World weddings" before Nancy's wedding took place. Katherine clearly sees the Old World traditional Ukrainian-Canadian wedding as something poetic, marvelously alive with color and pattern. She delights in its beauty and must be drawn back to the topic of Nancy's wedding.

As she is stitching through her Old World wedding digression, Katherine suddenly visualizes her mother, Maria, attending some community gathering, perhaps even a wedding. Maria is wearing a shawl that covers her head. At the time, Katherine thinks nothing of it, or rather, she thinks that her mother simply has chosen to wear the shawl over her head as a kind of personal preference. Later, Katherine learns that for a Ukrainian or a Ukrainian-Canadian married woman, going into public with her head covered "was a symbol of being married.[14]" Married women in the Ukrainian-Canadian community tend to cover their heads. Katherine is surprised to realize that there is a deep underlying reason for a seemingly pedestrian act on her mother's part.

Katherine recognizes that her mother, and by extension, the R family are connected to something that goes back into the past, that has reasons of its own, that is obscurely exotic. Maria moves in part, in a symbolic system—a covered head is a symbol of being a married woman; however, she seems to have communicated none of this to her daughter.

Resuming the thread of Nancy's wedding, Katherine introduces a new player, a cad trying to take advantage of her. While out on a wedding-related shopping expedition with the bride-to-be, the prospective groom, and the best man, a Mr. S, who is married and the local school teacher, Katherine finds herself being "pawed" in the back of the prospective groom's car, by the Mr. S. As the adult narrator, Katherine says simply, "it was very unpleasant." And it must have been. At the time, the naïve Katherine was a spirited 16-year-old. Yet, Katherine would not allow herself to expose Mr. S's activity to her elder sister or to the groom-to-be.

Why would Katherine choose to remain silent? Possibly out of a sense of decorum. Possibly out a sense of confusion. What would happen if she revealed Mr. S for who he was, a man who had little regard for women? What would the reactions of others be? Would she be accused of anything? Of course, shame and guilt might be factors in Katherine's silence—"I didn't *dare* say anything to Nancy and John." The word "dare" is a strong word that Katherine emphasizes. Would Nancy or John have reacted with outrage? Katherine makes none of this clear. The fact remains, that Katherine was alone in the back seat of a car, struggling to keep an unsavory character of some community standing off of her, and that a code of silence kept her isolated and separate. These were sisters who did not share confidences of this kind.

Thoughts of the best man's attempts to manhandle her lead Katherine into a second digression about how even the powerful Russian tsar, Peter the Great, objected to arbitrary violence directed towards women. Peter criticized the language of the Orthodox church marriage ceremony, wherein husbands were encouraged to beat their wives in order to teach their wives proper obedience. Katherine's turning to material from Peter the Great underscores a romantic interest in the past of petrine Russia.[15] By turning to Peter the Great, Katherine leans toward more pleasant thoughts: for her, here was a enlightened leader who spoke up on behalf of womankind, unlike the predatory Mr. S who attempted to take advantage of Katherine.

Katherine remembers nothing about the church ceremony attendant to Nancy's wedding. It is possible that she was not present at the church[16] and that she stayed at the homestead to help prepare for the post-service festivities. Katherine also pooh-poohs the idea that Nancy's wedding was related to earlier Ukrainian-Canadian weddings that she might remember, for what with distances, it was too far for the wedding party to celebrate at the bride's parents' home and then go to the groom's parents' home to celebrate. But, indeed, this is exactly what happened, we will discover later, according to Nancy.

That the R family went to the time and expense to host a wedding for the community communicates something about family identity. Outwardly, it is a grand gesture that intimates that the R family knows how to properly observe and mark life-transition events. Inwardly, it would seem that the wedding, as an important rite of passage ritual, would reaffirm bonds within the family. But from Katherine, we carry away a sense of isolation, a longing for a more colorful ritual, and a certain blindness to how deeply connected Nancy's wedding is to R family origins.

Personal Narrative: Katherine (Rite of Passage: Death) #1

On October 31st, 1918, Konstantyn, familiarly called "Gus," died. He was 30 years old, Katherine's uncle on her mother's side, and a victim of the flu pandemic of 1918.[17] A farm laborer, Gus managed to find his way to the hospital in Vegreville where he succumbed. His brothers, his sister Maria and her husband, his parents had no idea that he had contracted the lethal influenza. His sudden death came as a shock to them all. Shortly after Gus died, that is in 1920, his younger brother Bill died of typhus. For Gus's nieces, the R sisters, his death remains a conspicuous event brought forward from their childhood.

The R sisters did not know Gus well, for he was rarely around the homestead. Indeed, the youngest of the three, Vera, commingles the deaths of both of her uncles as one event. Gus, like so many young, unmarried Ukrainian-Canadian male immigrants, traveled the Pacific Northwest in search of work—farm labor, lumber camps, and the railways.[18] In spite of his long absences, the girls' association with him was a joyful one.

Katherine, Nancy and Vera have retained a vivid memory of Gus's funeral preparation[19] and its meaning in their lives—its personal meaning and its mythical (larger) meaning.

Katherine is eight years old when her uncle is brought to the homestead, dead. In two separate narratives, she brings up his death. Her first narrative follows.

28 April 1994, page 11—Uncle Gus's Funeral
KR: …When my Uncle Gus died, we all had to...because of the epidemic and nobody knew what to do with it...he a...1918 about...it was *the* big world-wide influenza epidemic. We all had to wear cheesecloth masks when we went anywhere. And when we brought him [home]...he died in a hospital in Vegreville...and when they brought him, [his] body...somebody in Vegreville just made simple, unfinished pine...whatever it was...coffins. It wasn't anything fancy. We could not bring the body into the house.

MJ: That was because of the fear of death?

KR: And the Mounted Police made circles...more frequently, and kept an eye. And we were instructed not to...of course, it was highly contagious. I don't know if it was from a *dead* person. They weren't breathing. I don't know. We obeyed.

And it was *dead* winter, heavy snow. And there he was. You know, you could take from the sled or the wagon wheels…you could take the box off. And the coffin was on the sled, I think, all night. It was one of my eeriest experiences... and I think I was about ten..1918, was I ten? 1919. I am 84 now.

MJ: You would have been 8.

KR: I had to go to the toilet in the night. I don't know why. [Brother] Bill was always the one who had to do it. Take me out.

MJ: He was the assigned elder for you. [laughter]

KR: And you know there was a candle. My mother left a candle burning in the window. And the coffin was out. And there was a wind moaning. It's easy to get a moaning wind. Your house isn't real tight or anything. It took me years to forget that moan.

It was such a terrible emotional thing for me to see, to think, because I knew he was frozen now, my dear Uncle Gus. And it seemed so heartless. I was very confused. And on another level, I was kind of happy because all the neighbors came and, I don't know, because my father, whoever, brought a great big box of apples and we didn't have things like that. The neighbors sort of fed...I don't know if they brought food or what. I do remember the police came by.

And then, I don't know that this happened with this uncle, because I didn't go, but if he had been in the house, when they carried him through the door, they'd have paused and have lowered it and raised it a couple of times. And then put it on the wagon, or whatever...And at every corner in the gate they stopped again... until they got to the church. Of course in this case, I don't know if they were in the church, or went right to the cemetery. As a matter of fact, I don't know how they dug a grave...maybe like they dig ditches there. They light a fire and move on and come back and light fire.

Anyhow, but the thing that I remember most about it, was my Grandmother [Elena], specially...standing...She was a very pretty woman, by the way. A very grandmotherly woman. Blue-eyed, rosy cheeked, kind of roundish everywhere, not heavy, but roundish. She was standing where the tongue gets to the wagon and then that was where Uncle Gus's head was in the coffin. She would keen, wail.

She [Elena] would weep. It was, I don't know how to describe it because it was weeping, it was singing, it was telling a story, in Ukrainian. She refused to speak English. And I know that some natives in different parts of the world still do it. I think the Irish keen. But it's very heartfelt and it's expected of a parent or a relative to keen and to wail and to talk about the story...

MJ: So as she was keening, she was telling a story...

KR: Oh yes! Absolutely. You know, I've been in several memorial services whoever goes to a memorial service will say something...a few words about the dead, or their relationship, or something like that, but they just talk. But she wailed and keened.

MJ: It was probably chilling and fascinating.

KR: Yes.

MJ: Do you remember anything she was saying?

KR: [Answers immediately] Things like "why didn't I die?" And how much she loved him and all of that.

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Katherine's narrative about the death of Gus is not a description of his actual funeral. Her narrative encompasses funeral preparations, moments of the funeral and a description of how a Ukrainian-Canadian funeral would work if all of the pieces were in place. Her narrative is revelatory about R family identity and speaks to a key moment in Katherine's identity formation. What is truly significant is the shock and thrill Katherine experiences observing her grandmother Elena as a Ukrainian (Bukovynian) woman— an experience that has a powerful impact.

Katherine begins her narrative somewhat consciously using the personal pronoun "my" to suggest her feelings of closeness to Gus. She opens with "when my Uncle Gus died," not "our." Her pronoun use also indicates Katherine's sense of being an individual separate from the rest of the family; this is *Katherine's* Uncle Gus, not Nancy's or Vera's.

Katherine communicates a sense of pride, in the acknowledgement that the family is connected to something even larger—"it was *the* big world-wide influenza epidemic." [Katherine's emphasis.] Particular details that Katherine fastens upon underscore her excitement at being part of a "world-wide" situation. There were cheesecloth masks, remarkable in themselves for a young person living on an isolated family farm. The Northwest Mounted Police were circling, going from quarter-section to quarter-section to observe and enforce quarantine rules. This activity is out-of-the-ordinary.

Katherine at the same time shows solidarity with the rest of the family. Repeatedly she says, "we had to…we had to." The outside world is forcing itself in upon the immigrant family and changing the way it will do things. Under normal circumstances in a Ukrainian-Canadian household, at death, the body of the deceased would be brought into the home and laid-out in the room—the *velyka khata*[20]— where the icons were hung for family and friends to maintain vigil over for a three-day period, before burial. But officials trying to stem the spread of influenza have changed the rules for everyone. Katherine attests to this. "We could not bring the body into the house," she says.

In her narrative, Katherine switches back and forth among a number of topics related to a Ukrainian-Canadian funeral. The technical part of her artist-mind, that part that seeks a cognitive understanding, delights in the details of exactly how things are done, for example, the seasonal switching of a wagon box from wheels to sleigh runners. Her curiosity leads her to digress into the practical difficulties around death and burial—how does frozen earth yield itself to grave digging? Or why would the deceased who had obviously stopped breathing be so highly contagious? The creative and gifted storyteller uses dramatic phrasing—"And it was *dead* winter [Katherine's emphasis], heavy snow.

And there he was." To set the scene, she chooses poetic imagery — "dead winter" and "heavy snow." The very elements seem to cooperate: "There was a wind moaning," she says. This moaning wind seems to be everywhere, almost animate.

It troubles Katherine that the coffin is made of "simple, unfinished pine…It wasn't anything fancy." A traditional Ukrainian-Canadian coffin would indeed be made of unfinished pine,[21] but Katherine seems not to understand this. She does understand the summary haste with which her dead uncle has been dispatched from the hospital in Vegreville. She is taken aback by her grandmother's keening. The grandmother [Elena] keens in the Ukrainian tongue. Katherine tells us that Elena has refused to speak English throughout her life in Canada.[22] This detail can go in two directions: Elena is backwards and stubborn or Elena is an untainted soul from a different place. Indeed, Katherine expands upon her idea about Elena's keening by suggesting that her keening might be like that of "some natives in different parts of the world," who still keen. Thus, looking back to her youth, she sees her grandmother as a cultural artifact.

The presentation of mundane aspects of life in her funeral narrative somehow enables Katherine to move into the topic of the more spiritual, her inner turmoil. "I had to go to the toilet in the night," Katherine says. But once she is outside, she comes face to face with the thing she fears—"the coffin was on the sled…It was one of my eeriest experiences….It was such a terrible emotional thing for me to see, to think, because I knew he was frozen now, my dear Uncle Gus. And it seemed so heartless."

One of the purposes of ritual is to mark certain events and communicate how and why these events are important. Katherine, as a child, seems to be aware that there is a way that her elders address death, that there is a set of rules, a ritual, to be followed regarding the handling of the deceased. She comments upon its observation in the absence: the body should be brought into the house, but Gus's body is not brought into the house. Once Katherine is outside, she sees that her mother has "left a candle burning in the window." Although she doesn't explain it, Katherine seems to know that a candle, lit for the deceased, is part of the activity that takes place when someone dies. The candle in the window raises no eyebrows. Katherine simply accepts her mother's symbolic act as part of ritual observance around death.

Katherine is struck by the fact that such a solemn occasion would also be a time of feasting. Someone has brought the rare treat of fruit, the "great big box of apples," and neighbors put together a meal. Indeed, Katherine feels inner conflict; how can she feel joy in this time of sadness? No one has explained to her that the funeral feast is a traditional part of bidding the dead farewell.

At some undisclosed later point in her youth, Katherine takes note of a traditional Ukrainian-Canadian funeral and commits its ritual parts to memory. But in the case of Gus, because his body is in the coffin outside, the ritual order of things is disturbed. Katherine does not witness what normally would have taken place. She refers to this in her narrative by back-tracking, to explain just how things would have transpired, if Gus's body had been laid-out in the house. It is striking in this narrative, how clearly she knows the ritual steps along the route to burial —"if he had been in the house, when they carried him through the door, they'd have paused and have lowered it and raised it a couple of times. And then put it on the wagon, or whatever...And at every corner in the gate, they stopped again...until they got to the church," she says. Perhaps because of her youth or the cold or being needed at home, Katherine did not accompany the funerary party to the church and the cemetery. She can only surmise how things were for Gus. It is notable, though, that Katherine remembers the details of funerary ritual as clearly as she does. Her remembering has meaning. Katherine would not have witnessed a Ukrainian-Canadian funeral from the time she left Alberta in 1928 to the present.

Certainly, Katherine is drawn to the outward and visible aspects of ritual. The details of ritual observance appeal to her intellectual self; she is curious to know how a particular ritual works. This is possibly why she remembers the "steps" for a funeral. But as for what lies inside the ritual, its meaning, she does not speak of it. With a funeral ritual, the R family extends to Gus a proper leave-taking and for themselves, by virtue of ritual, they make peace with the unknown.

It is the keening of Katherine's grandmother Elena that forms the core of her narrative. This stylized singing and crying out, weeping with words, wailing—all in the Ukrainian language; this positioning oneself at the deceased's head—in this case at the wagon-sled's tongue; this insistence of doing things in Ukrainian, in a Ukrainian way, in a way that Katherine has never quite seen before—all of this has startled, shocked and awakened in Katherine the knowledge that she is part of something she hasn't understood until this moment. It is the moment, as a child, when Katherine hears and observes her grandmother's ritual grieving. She is drawn into a deeper sense of family identity.

It seems that Katherine did not see her grandmother often or get to know her intimately. In spite of the fact that Elena lived with the R family on at least two separate occasions, Elena kept to herself, speaking only Ukrainian in a household that was determined to learn English. However, Katherine introduces her grandmother warmly, in a manner that shows she identifies with her. Elena is "very pretty," "grandmotherly," "a blue-eyed, rosy cheeked" and "roundish" woman. Katherine has an opportunity to study her closely during the funeral and so she does. There is Elena "standing where the tongue gets to the wagon;" she begins to "wail." All of the other details of Gus's death and funeral preparations fall away from Katherine. Her attention goes to Elena. Katherine, who is rarely at a loss for words, does not know how to describe what is going on.

It must have been a shock to see and hear her grandmother keen, for this would have been the first time Katherine observed ritual grieving in her family.[23] But Katherine quickly grasps what is going on. And from the distance of age, Katherine coolly explains that the keening is "heartfelt" and "expected of a parent or relative," as a kind of duty to the dead. When asked seventy-six years later, what her grandmother was keening, Katherine does not hesitate: Elena was saying "'Why didn't I die?' and how much she loved [her son]."

What seems to have dawned on Katherine at the time was a specific sense of real connection, to a grandmother she did not know well, and to an identification with her family identity—their Ukrainian-ness. She seems to have said to herself, "I am part of this strange, special thing that my grandmother is doing. My elders are showing me who I am and who they are." Elena's keening becomes a moment of connection with family identity for Katherine.

Personal Narrative: Katherine (Rite of Passage: Death) #2

A second narrative about the death of Gus was recorded several weeks after the first narrative. Since Katherine is aware of the fact that she already has shared the bulk of the material with me, she speaks at a slight distance from the first narrative, shortening and generalizing, yet by presenting it again, she shows that the event is important.

> 23 March 1994, Index (#233 to 280)—Uncle Gus's Funeral
> KR: This is aside and it is strictly my own memory…I was 8 years old…And I always had terrible tummy aches…
>
> *Adolph [KR's husband]: You had what?*
>
> KR: Tummy aches, just like now [slight laugh]…and my brother Bill would have to take me out [to the toilet]. He used to be so furious with me…in the dead of cold winter. And I didn't blame him. But I didn't know what I could do about it.
>
> …And I remember getting up. And we were not to bring the dead bodies into the house. If we met together during the flu epidemic, they couldn't stop us, because funerals were a very important ritual. We had to wear cheesecloth masks…
>
> And so here was this plain (box)… pine box on a sled…It was in the Fall or Winter [Gus died on October 31st, 1918]…I think it was a sled or maybe it was a wheel, wagon. No, it *was* winter. Outside, I could see through the kitchen window, and my mother had candles in the window. And Uncle Gus, I knew Uncle Gus was, was in there [in the coffin outside], and I knew he'd be frozen, because it was so terribly cold.
>
> I had that very eerie kind of a feeling that came over me, and I would…for years…and I never could figure out what it was that brought all that feeling back, back to me…And then, our, you know if you were at all interested in the customs of that time, the Old Country customs, we walked behind the cortage [Katherine pronounces "cortege" as "cortage"], the coffin, it was on a sled. We walked behind it. And if, if the body had been in the house…if they carried it out, the pall bearers would have stopped in the doorway and lifted it and raised it three times. Every corner, every gate, they did the same.
>
> *MJ: Oh. And why did they do…[this]?*

> KR: A farewell, I suppose.
>
> *MJ: I see. So but if you didn't bring it into the house…*
>
> KR: You skipped that part, but you still went through the whole thing, that way. And, and my grandmother, I remember…and my mother, too, they keened, like the Irish do….Do you know what keening is?
>
> *MJ: It's a cry or a whine…*
>
> KR: It's a weeping, and you recite the virtues and you remonstrate with God….You know, all the things…and they stand at the head of the…'cause the casket was open during the day and the neighborhood came…And, and so it was really, you know, a pretty memorable experience for a kid, you know, all that keening…[She laughs].

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Katherine frames her second funeral narrative with the homely image of a child's tummy ache and an older brother's reluctantly accompanying his younger sister outside in the wintry night to the outhouse. That the brother is "furious" with her for being roused from sleep is a new detail. It adds to the sense of a child's discomfiture—tummy ache, scant sympathy, cold night, and there in the night, the body of a loved uncle in a coffin, unprotected from the cold.

Perhaps Katherine has had moments of thought since her earlier funeral narrative, about the importance of ritual in her youth. Now she flatly states that "funerals were a very important ritual" in those days. Katherine also sounds a note of familial bravado. We know that the Northwest Mounted Police have discouraged any sort of community gathering because of the highly contagious influenza, but Katherine insists that her family could not be deterred from gathering for a funeral, regardless of the danger of illness. Other families may avoid the danger, but not hers. It is a point of pride.

Katherine goes on to cover much of the same material as earlier: the cheesecloth masks, the pine box coffin on the sled, candles lit in the kitchen window and visible from outside, and theoretically, the steps one followed in a complete funeral, for example, the pallbearers carrying the body out of the house, stopping at thresholds (doorways, gates) and road crossings to raise and lower the coffin, the funeral cortege following the coffin to the church and the cemetery. She tries to outline the various segments of the funeral ritual, because she now knows that I am interested in "the customs of that time, the Old Country customs." Although she is describing the customs that were current when she was a child in Canada, Katherine thinks of them as "Old Country." She stands outside of the ritual now.

She quizzes me about what keening is and finding my answer not quite adequate, elaborates a kind of "how to" formula: The coffin is open. You stand at the head of the deceased, weeping, "and you recite the virtues and you remonstrate with God." Rather cut-and-dried. Laughing, Katherine reduces keening to "a pretty memorable experience for a kid." Thus, in her second version of the funeral narrative, Katherine is even clearer about her emotional detachment and her primarily intellectual grasp of ritual.

Personal Narrative: Katherine (Ritual: Miscellaneous) #1

Katherine turns to an analytical discussion of ritual in the following narrative. Acknowledging that there were undoubtedly other rituals that her family observed when she was a child, Katherine cherry-picks ritual gestures that were practiced in an every-day context by the family. For example, she notes the reverence shown when disposing of a worn-out icon, the formula for retrieving a dropped piece of bread or for bringing water from the well into the house. She alludes to the gradual change away from carrying out these ritual acts. From her privileged position as an elder child, Katherine remembers a time when diurnal rituals were observed.

> 28 April 1994, page 1—Icons, a piece of bread, water from the well
> KR: Well, I suppose we had other kinds of rituals. It is the peasants really, who establish rituals...or invent or remember or believe in them. And we used to...we were way out on the farm. There weren't many homes when I was a little girl. And frequently travelers would come to our house... to spend the night because there was no place to stop. And they would have their sleeping bags or whatever, 'cause there was always room on the floor. And ah, the Mounted Police would come too you know, in their travels. It was always exciting...to [us] little kids, to have somebody come and we'd have peddlers and my mother acquired a lot of

> these shiny, I suppose, very cheap, loud icons...these pictures...I think [brother] Bill has one.
>
> *MJ: From a peddler?*
> KR: Yes.
> *MJ: They would sell them...they would trade for...*
>
> KR: Well they'd leave them when they...One of the things…when they became too shabby and my mother wanted to dispose of them, we would sometimes walk to school across the fields more or less...cutting corners, because maybe all the horses would be...on the... busy on the farm. And there was a big slough. I don't know if that's familiar...[the] word "slough." A shallow wet spot. A little more than just a wet spot like here [in California]. There were always a tremendous number of ducks there when the fly time [came]. And our dog would get exhausted and, you'd, we'd hear him barking...and they'd take off. Anyway, we had to take these shabby pictures and float them on the water. That was a respectful way of disposing of them. Now, whether it was particular...how widespread that belief was...
>
> Then, also we were wheat farmers, the staff of life. And whenever we dropped a piece of bread, we had to pick it up and kiss it. A kind of asking forgiveness. Now a lot of these things, I think, your mother [Vera] would not remember, because things changed and I'm quite a bit older. And whenever we brought in water from the well, we'd say, "Bless the water," in Ukrainian, of course, and then somebody would say, "God blesses the water."

#####

Without explaining how she has come to the following conclusion, Katherine states that "It is the peasants really, who establish rituals…or invent or remember or believe in them." Whether she includes herself in this group is hard to know, for on the one hand, Katherine is now proud of her Ukrainian heritage, but on the other hand, she no longer identifies with it. Katherine seems to respect the wisdom of "the peasants," whomever they are. She reveals that she and the R family have indeed remembered certain Ukrainian rituals, at least enough to go through the motions of them, and are thus, like the peasants, but there is a distancing here.

Personal Narrative: Katherine (Ritual: Miscellaneous) #2

In another narrative, Katherine confides her own superstitious nature. As a child who had already experienced the ritual command of her grandmother, that is, she had watched and heard Elena keen, Katherine seems to have respected Elena for her ritual authority. Thus, Katherine would certainly have been influenced passively by Elena's belief system.

> 28 April 1994, page 9—Spirits
> *MJ: OK. So these were his* [your Uncle Nick's] *parents* [grandmother Elena and grandfather Ivan].
>
> KR: Yes.
>
> MJ: *And how long did you stay with them?*
>
> KR: I really don't know. It seemed to me an awfully long time. I had to sleep with my grandmother and she seemed so terribly, terribly old to me and I was petrified that she'd die while I was in her bed! [K's voice gets louder and goes up a pitch. Laughter.]
>
> *MJ: Oh, no. Oh, no. [laughter] Well, you're thinking about those things when you're 10. These things come up.*
>
> KR: Oh, I believed in witches and things. [laughter] God! Whenever I went into one room, from a dark place into a light place, I always felt that something was going to catch me and I'd sort of jump in.
>
> *MJ: Well, you were told stories. You heard stories. You were an impressionable, creative child...*
>
> KR: Yes. You know these people who came and spent the night, they'd tell us tales. And if you read really about the Old Country, you'll know that they told tales. And we children would believe them. And some of them were gory.
>
> *MJ: The tales probably scared the adults as well.*
>
> KR: I think so....
> And then while I was living there [with Elena], they had a door that didn't fit very well. And it would...by then my grandmother had lost two sons, Uncle Bill and Uncle Gus. A real tragedy. [They were] Handsome young men. But you saw the picture [We've studied a photo of the men.]. But anyhow, she lost the two men. They were woodsmen, well you can see from the picture... But they also then started digging wells for new farmers. Well, one [Gus] succumbed first, in 1918, to the flu epidemic. And the other one [Bill] only about a year or two later, to typhoid, because they were digging wells...There was no clean water...He drank something...So the door would swing open and grandmother would say that that was one of the boys. [Laughs] Did *I* get goose pimples! It never occurred to me not to think that. That it was just a superstition!

#####

This narrative recalls a time when Katherine is ten years old—it is 1920— and living on her grandparents' homestead near St. Paul de Metis. Her grandmother Elena doubtless continues to grieve for her sons. It has been two years since the death of Gus, a year since the death of his younger brother, Bill. Katherine has been sent out to help Elena. The sojourn with her grandparents is not something Katherine seems to enjoy. Of Elena, Katherine says, "I had to sleep with my grandmother and she seemed so terribly, terribly old to me[24] and I was petrified that she'd die while I was in her bed." It makes some sense that Katherine would be haunted by death, for it has been in the forefront for her grandmother and mother for several recent years. Katherine is beset by imaginary fears, fears of "witches and things." She seems to think that her fears are the result of the stories she has heard and, as if, by way of corroboration, she counsels, "if you read really about the Old Country, you'll know that they told tales." Her analytical justification aside, Katherine undoubtedly crossed paths with some masterful weavers-of-tales. One wonders at what point she began to realize that her grandmother was not to be trusted in matters of belief, that what Elena truly believed "was just a superstition" for Katherine. Certainly for her first ten years, Katherine unconsciously respected and absorbed the rituals and belief systems of her grandmother and of her mother. This must have been a challenge, for Elena looked back to remembered village ritual tradition as truculently as Maria peered forward to new ways in a new world.

We turn now to Katherine's narratives about calendar rituals, her recollections of how her family marked Christmas, *Iordan*, Easter and *Zeleni Sviata*. These are the calendar events that came up in the course of our talks, events that Katherine recollected. Her parents may have observed more of the calendar rituals than Katherine presents. Her grandparents, Elena, in particular, certainly did.[25]

Personal Narrative: Katherine (Calendar Ritual: Christmas) #1

28 April 1994, p. 3-4—Christmas
KR: We had other beliefs. We really believed, when we were little, that the cattle understood what we said at Christmas Eve because they were there when Christ

was born in the stable. And we'd have to milk them, but we'd be very reverent about the whole thing.

MJ: That's charming. Really charming. But then your parents must have told you these stories. Because you wouldn't do this otherwise.

KR: And then also on Christmas Eve...well, the day, well of course we fasted. We had to fast, otherwise the blackbirds would come and pick up the seed planted. And then we broke the fast with wheat. Your mother has tried to cook that wheat. I tried to. It was always like a rock. I could never make it edible….and with poppy seeds and stuff like that. And we didn't have Christmas trees, didn't really know about Christmas trees. We spread hay, especially under the dining room table. Fragrant hay, because that was in the stable. In our part of Canada there are no conifers, just small deciduous trees. And then we'd[26] go caroling.

MJ: Christmas wasn't about Santa Claus.

KR: Yes, it was religious. You were more likely to get gifts at New Year's than Christmas. Like in Mexico, I think.[27] You know, they used to construct a star...I've seen my brothers do it...with paraffin paper on both sides, and put a candle in it,[28] and then they'd come up to your window...it's usually the young men...and then they'd sing the carols.

MJ: Oh, yes. I've seen pictures of this, on Ukrainian Christmas greeting cards...

KR: Yes, it's really very nice. And then you'd invite them in. Give them some money...give them whatever you had. Usually the young bucks, the young men, who collected the money they then...right after Christmas, maybe even on New Year's Day, I don't remember, at somebody's house, they'd throw a dance for all the young people [she laughs]. Well, you know, it was a community. It was all Ukrainians there.

#####

In this first version of her Christmas narrative, Katherine presents an endearing image. She and her older sister, Nancy, and her three older brothers, children, all, "really believed" that on Christmas Eve, the farm animals could speak to God. Therefore, they carried themselves with greater reverence around the animals. Pre-Christmas fasting was to prevent the blackbirds from coming and picking up the planted seed. The reciprocal ritual gesture for this preventative fast was that the fast was broken with wheat, that is, with the ritual dish called *kutia*. The children would have acquired the belief in this activity from their parents, and maintained their belief until the parents or outsiders of some authority convinced them that these things were not so.

Katherine's mother, Maria, would cook the *kutia*, the first dish eaten to break the fast—of the twelve ritual dishes prepared for Christmas Eve. In her narrative however, Katherine does not speak of the *kutia* Maria made, for example, how she prepared the wheat, or what she put into the recipe, or how the *kutia* ultimately tasted. Instead, she implies that her mother knew how to make good-tasting *kutia*, for she, Katherine, and her sisters, tried "to cook that wheat," but they never quite got it right. In Katherine's particular case "it [the *kutia*] was always like a rock. I could never make it edible." One can infer from this that she did not learn how to make the *kutia* from her mother and that her mother did not communicate how to make the *kutia* to her daughter.

Maria tended to emphasize what she thought useful for the future for her daughters. For example, their school education was important to her and she found ways to keep most, but not all, of her daughters in school. What she did not consider important, she tended to place less emphasis on, in terms of teaching and passing on. Thus, to Maria's way of thinking, because *kutia*-making was less useful knowledge, she didn't emphasize the importance of learning how to make it. It was a cast-off for Maria. Her daughters did not carry on the ritual. Once Katherine left the farm, she seems to have tried to make the dish on her own once or twice, but with little success. And that was that; the celebration of Christmas Eve with *kutia* ended for Katherine. Once married, she leaned towards the German customs of her husband's family.

Katherine enumerates the bits of traditional Ukrainian-Canadian Christmas and New Year's that she has retained in her memory: the belief that the cattle could speak on Christmas Eve, fasting to prevent the blackbirds from returning to gobble up the planted seed, spreading hay under the table, going out to other homesteads to carol, the young men making and carrying a star-lantern to carol and collect money for a dance. Her emphasis is on the fact that the Christmas she remembers as a child was a religious celebration, according to Katherine, like Christmas in Mexico where reflecting upon the birth of Christ is tantamount, as opposed to giving gifts to children. Katherine's comparison between a Ukrainian-Canadian and a Mexican Christmas betrays her love of color and of rich folkloric belief as well. "It's really very nice," she says. At the distance of approximately seventy-five years, the Christmas she knew as a child is a fetching fantasy. It does underscore the fact that in the family's early years, it did observe Ukrainian-Canadian calendar rituals in a heartfelt and reverential manner.

As an afterthought and, doubtless thinking through the portrait of observance she has just sketched, Katherine says, "Well, you know, it was a community. It was all Ukrainians there."[29] This too, is, in part, a fantasy acquired later in life. But Katherine shows a kind of insistence and pride for the picture she has created.

Personal Narrative: Katherine (Calendar Ritual: Christmas) #2

In the second narrative about the Christmas she remembers as a child, Katherine stresses the change she observed in the way rituals were celebrated. From her vantage as an older daughter in the R family, Katherine assumes a position of authority.

> 23 March 1994, tape index #004-030—Christmas
> KR: There are some ethnic things that I remember, because I am older than Alice [sister], a lot older, and also older than your mother. So my time was a different time from theirs. Not only in the matter of the years, that kind of distance, but that it was a rapidly changing world. So customs changed. We had a lot…when I was a girl, we had a lot of …still had a lot of the European customs. Like, say, at Christmas time, we didn't have a Christmas tree. We put hay under the table. We burnt incense. We put hay, because this was the Christ child in his bed…
>
> *MJ: And this would have been Al and Bill and Sam…and you and Nancy?*
>
> KR: Yes ….I started to talk about Christmas, oh, and about the time-element, that there's a big difference between her [your mother's] time and my time. Not only because I'm several years older, but because there was acceleration of change.
>
> And, uhmmm…we didn't have Christmas trees, we had hay under the tree [table] and we burnt incense, because that's one of the gifts the Wisemen brought. And we believed this myth, that because there were cattle in the stable [where Christ was born], that that night they could understand our speech. And we'd go into the stable with a great reverence.
>
> And those winter nights, in that part of Canada, which was so absolutely crystal clear, unpolluted. The sky would be so full of stars, and the stars would be so

> close. And even as children, we appreciated that. That didn't have to be pointed out to us. We always looked at the stars in the winter.

#####

Katherine here renders the observance of the calendar ritual, Christmas, with a broad brush, and with quick strokes as well. She shows that she can still recall the ritual act and then give the reason for the act. It is a bit mechanical, reminiscent of those electrified boards at nature centers where you match the birds to the bird songs. For example, incense was burned because the Three Wisemen carried incense and used it. The R family showed reverence on Christmas Eve with farm chores because they believed that the cattle in the stable could speak. They placed hay under the dinner table because the Christ child was born in a hay-filled manger and the ritual gesture celebrated this event.

It is not Christmas or the way she saw its observance change in the R family—from Old World ["European"] ritual to something more New World—that seems to capture Katherine's attention. Instead, she drifts into a kind of lament, a longing for the winter nights at Soda Lake. The sky would be so full of stars that "even as children," she and her siblings seemed to understand that this was a special gift, a special kind of beauty granted to them. Their reverence, according to Katherine, extended to the night sky. This expressed romance for the beauty of the northern environment, we shall see, is unique to Katherine. It is pantheistic in tone. She left the homestead when she was eighteen and later looked back with a sense of poetic appreciation and a romantic longing for what may or may not have been. Does Katherine hint in her narrative that the ritual observance of Christmas was not as important to her and others as an appreciation of nature? Perhaps. She seems to associate family identity with the ability to perceive nature's beauty. Ultimately, Katherine acknowledges that there were pleasant memories associated with the hard life on the homestead.

Personal Narrative: Katherine (Calendar Ritual: *Iordan*)

> 31 August 2000, Tape #2, tape index (#318-336)—*Iordan* and Easter
> KR: In the season, we ah…like around Easter-time, we'd have water blessed in church. That is, we took a bottle of water and bread and salt to be blessed. And

> you brought the water back and you poured it down into the well, a little bit…and some they put into the washbasin with a dime and a red Easter egg[30]…I don't know what they...The dime was for prosperity. I don't know what the red Easter egg was for.[31] But some water had a ritual, real meaning…. In some ways it was very rich.

#####

> Telephone interview, 25 February 2001—*Iordan*
> KR: For *Iordan*, my parents took water and they took salt and they went to church at midnight. Some of the blessed water was dropped into the well water. We'd put a few drops of that blessed water into a wash basin [and wash our faces in it]. Above all, it went into the well. We would say, "God blesses the water."…
>
> [When Katherine and Nancy's younger sister Vera was 4 years old, she contracted a fever from which she nearly died. Indeed, the girls' mother, Maria, was convinced that the child would die and began making bees' wax candles in preparation for her death.]
>
> *MJ: Did she [Maria] use holy water for Vera?*
>
> KR: I'm sure she was reaching for *everything*. [Emphasis is Katherine's]

#####

In her two brief narratives about the R family's observance of the January 19th ritual of *Iordan*, the blessing of the waters, Katherine confuses or rather combines the rituals of *Iordan* with ritual gestures more associated with Easter. She admits that she is unclear what the various parts of the ritual symbolically stand for—the coin, the red egg, but Katherine insists that these ritual components have "real meaning." The probability that her mother occasionally made use of the *Iordan*-blessed water to facilitate the return to health of a sick or injured child is not remote. And like her narratives about the celebration of Christmas, Katherine adds that with these rituals that one celebrated, "it was very rich." The "it" she speaks of seems to refer to life on the homestead at Soda Lake.

Personal Narrative: Katherine (Calendar Ritual: Easter) #1

Just as she has confused *Iordan* with Easter, Katherine seems briefly to confuse Easter with *Iordan*. It seems unlikely that the R family would have taken water to church for the blessing of their Easter basket. Taking water to church to be blessed would have been done for *Iordan*. She begins her narrative about Easter with this ritual transposition.

> 28 April 1994, p. 2-3
> KR: Of course at Easter time we took water to the church, at the midnight blessing of the food and bread and *pysanky* [eggs] and salt. We always made a pillar of salt.
>
> *MJ: How did you make a pillar of salt?*
>
> KR: Well saturate of salt in water and gradually it would dry up. You made it way ahead of time. You know, you poured it into something like that and it would dry up. They had the going around the church...let's see, what did that represent, the going around the church...?
>
> *MJ: You mean the outside of the building?*
>
> KR: And the door opened. I guess that was sort of like searching for Christ. And the open door was that the tomb was open and empty.
>
> *MJ: Was Easter more important as a religious holiday?*
>
> KR: I would think so, yes. Christmas was a happier holiday but Easter was more solemn. And then the priests would bless all of this, including water. And then when you came home you poured a little of that blessed water into wells. [like a well in the ground] If they had enough water, we had to wash our face in the house in a basin and there was a solid red Easter egg in it and a dime.
>
> *MJ: A dime?*
>
> KR: You poured a little of that blessed water into the water you washed in on Easter morning. And the dime was for good fortune and the egg was for health.
>
> *MJ: And why was it red?*
>
> KR: I don't know...it never occurred to me, maybe because it was like blood. So we had things like that.
>
> *MJ: Did you or your mother make pysanky, Ukrainian Easter eggs?*
>
> KR: Oh, yes. We always made our Easter eggs, *pysanky*. In fact my mother used to make the dye.
>
> *MJ: How did she...what did she..?.*

> KR: Well, you know onion makes a soft gold, and beet juice does something and, I can't tell you, because I wasn't interested. And I think that Adrienne [KR's daughter] still has the little stylus for writing on the eggs. And my mother...they used to have calendars with the little brass hanger. And they'd save the hangers. And then they'd heat them and pound them until they got thinner and then they'd cut them and roll them around the end of a needle. The stronger the finger, the finer the needle, the finer stylus you got. They'd split a stick, one end of it, wrap it around with hair or something or fine wire...and *that* is what you wrote with on eggs. You didn't use paraffin. You used beeswax. I'll show you before you come [go]...I have some of my mother's wool dyed with vegetables.
>
> MJ: *Oh, I'd love to see it.*
>
> KR: Just very little bits, you know. It was just gorgeous colors.

#####

Katherine's eye for detail is unerring. Not only does she reveal that salt was placed in the Easter basket, along with "food and bread and *pysanky*," but the salt was molded into the form of a pillar. Katherine excels at describing— how a pillar of salt is made, how her mother made dye for the eggs and for fabric, how her mother decorated the eggs. The lush tones that her mother achieved with the vegetable dyes, still have the power to thrill Katherine, with her artist's sensibility. Katherine's interest in ritual observation lies in how things work and look.

As in her earlier narratives about Christmas, Katherine delineates the symbolic meaning of particular Easter ritual gestures. Circling the church meant something, as did the doors of the church being flung open, and the ritual washing at home in the basin with the red egg and the dime in it. At one time, Katherine probably knew that "this" meant "that" in all of these cases. She intimates that there was much that was symbolic around Easter. The red egg placed in the bottom of the filled wash basin "was for health," but Katherine can only speculate about the meaning of its color. That the red color had some symbolic meaning, of this, Katherine has no doubt. "We had things like that," she says. In other words, we had symbolism, wherein the color red stood for Christ's blood.

When asked to make a comparison between Christmas and Easter as religious holidays, Katherine acknowledges that "Christmas was a happier holiday, but Easter was more solemn." Thus we can infer that some of the deeper currents of each ritual cycle found their way to Katherine.

Personal Narrative: Katherine (Calendar Ritual: Easter) #2

In a second narrative about Easter, Katherine emphasizes the games that would take place among the children. After the Easter morning service and the blessing of the baskets, and going home to break the Easter fast, the children would return to the churchyard.[32] There they would hold a competition with their eggs, knocking one egg against another. When the [hard-boiled] egg broke, the holder of the unbroken egg, the winner, would walk off with the broken egg as her or his trophy.

> 14 March 1997, interview from #432-466 on tape—Easter and Zelanko's Bells
> KR: We had competition with Easter eggs. Easter Sunday we'd go to church, or [Easter] Monday. I don't know. And we were allowed to go into the bell tower—the kids, the children were— and ring the bells all we want.[33]
>
> *MJ: Mr. Zelanko's bells?*
>
> KR: Yeah. And he knew how to ring those bells. I don't know how many bells there were. You could tell by the way he was ringing it whether somebody had died, or whether something was going on. Also, we went to church and we took our own eggs and we would play games and knock...and whoever's egg survived...the one whose egg broke had to give it up. So whoever ended up with more broken eggs [was the winner and got to eat them]....

#####

The children could also ring the bells in the church bell tower, a free-standing structure separate from the church building. Because the church bell tower was on the property of a Ukrainian homesteader named Zelanko, the R children referred to the bells as Zelanko's bells. It seems that he volunteered to ring the bells whenever the occasion called for it and that he was quite good at ringing the bells expressively.[34] One of the sensory threads in Katherine's narrative is the sound of the ringing bells and what it communicated. That these bells were an important part of the Soda Lake community's communication system underscores the seriousness with which a bell ringer would approach them. Easter was obviously a day of joyous release. The children's bell-ringing a ritual part of Easter's observance, carried from the Old World to the New.[35]

Katherine speaks very little about the inner nature of this important calendar ritual. Katherine loves bells. In narratives, which do not appear here, she has fondly described the sounds of the horses' harness bells in winter. She is a connoisseur of wind-chime harmonies. My husband's and my wedding gift from Katherine consisted of a beautifully toned set of chimes. It may be my own romance, but I would like to think that Katherine's bell and wind-chime avocation reaches back to something she absorbed from the ritual observance of Easter.

Personal Narrative: Katherine (Calendar Ritual: *Zeleni Sviata*)

The last of the calendar rituals that Katherine makes reference to in a narrative is *Zeleni Sviata*. The ritual came fifty days after Easter, somewhere around the end of May when the leaves of the black and the white poplar trees would be coming out near Soda Lake. Katherine indicates that the holiday was observed in the R family by tying cut saplings to the gateposts and by decorating the windows of the house with leaves. It makes sense that Katherine would be attracted to the artful aspects of a ritual like *Zeleni Sviata* and that, as a latent pantheist, not an environmentalist, she would regret the cutting of young trees.[36]

> 14 March 1997, tape index #386-398—*Zeleni Sviata* or Green Holidays
> KR: *Zeleni Sviata*. It was in spring, I know. Of course in Canada, spring doesn't come 'til.... But it came when the leaves came out. We used to pick the leaves...make [them] wet with our tongues and make patterns on the windows.
>
> *MJ: Yes, it's really lovely...*
>
> KR: And also, we would tie a young sapling to the gate. I always felt that it was too bad that we had to cut a sapling. But they were all over.

#####

There is a slight sense of wistfulness in Katherine's *Zeleni Sviata* narrative. To observe the progress of spring must have been a joy and to bring parts of spring into the house, a joy as well. But the sacrifice of young saplings pained Katherine. Once cut, they would cease to grow. True, they were not rare, but Katherine would have preferred that they adorn the fields and not, for the instant of a Sunday's ritual, the gateposts. In this narrative, it would seem that Katherine applies her present attitudes over what she might have felt at the time. One wonders whether Katherine "always" felt pained for the loss of a sapling. Yet, her comment may also reflect her adult-self's belief that plants possess living spirits. Perhaps this is a legacy of Elena's connection to nature and a world in which spirits dwell and its impact on Katherine.

Concluding remarks on Katherine's personal narratives

What does all this convey about the construction and expression of R family identity from Katherine's perspective? Her narratives go back and forth between the insights and attitudes she held as a child or as a youth and what she thinks today as an adult looking back: "this is who we were, this is what we are," she infers.

By speaking of the rituals that the R family observed, Katherine nevertheless succinctly captures the moments when the family acted in concert and expressed itself as a cohesive entity. In her narratives, Katherine argues in spite of an intellectual opposition to it, that ritual observance, in general, is important, for she takes special note of ritual observance. Indeed, she takes some pleasure when the steps of a ritual have been followed, that is, when ritual propriety has been met. This would seem to indicate that Katherine is part of a family group that once knew what comprised a particular ritual. And indeed, the R family did observe rituals surrounding birth, marriage, death and calendar events with some completeness. She projects, perhaps unknowingly, a sense of pride and of belonging in this knowledge. She delights in the details and the "color" of particular rituals. Her subliminal "transmission of family identity" seems to state: when everything has a symbolic meaning, and one knows what the symbolic meaning is, one's life is made richer by this knowledge.

However, in the narratives that focus on family christenings, Katherine questions the necessity of ritual practice. When the ritual welcoming of a new infant into the community involves the ritual segregation of her mother from the community, Katherine expresses her anger over the seeming injustice. Below the surface of ritual lies alienation and injustice, it would seem for Katherine. When Katherine weaves her narrative about her sister's wedding, in this important rite of passage for the family, one does not have a sense of a family's bonding experience, but rather Katherine's spiritual isolation. Only with a funeral ritual does Katherine seem to sense an expression of family identity, and this comes through her grandmother Elena, whose ritual authority commands Katherine's complete attention. And here, Katherine's emotional connection to ritual, her visceral feeling for the R family identity, is unmistakable. She sees the Rs as a group, going forward with their funeral preparations in spite of proscriptions imposed by the 1918 Spanish influenza. And it is a just and proud thing in her eyes to accord a loved uncle a "proper" ritual leave-taking, to help him and the R family make peace with the unknown—in itself a left-handed nod to the emotional power of established ritual.

In general, there is a conflicted quality to Katherine's expression of family identity. She expresses how, as a family, the Rs looked askance at Ukrainian-Canadian ritual traditions while nevertheless embracing certain aspects of them.[37] The Rs were both inside and outside of their own ritual traditions and, the desire to assimilate into Canadian culture played its part. But assimilation tectonics are not the drivers here. The R family, early on, carried and communicated certain attitudes among its members. For her part, Katherine's narratives convey an analytical regard for ritual, rather than an embracing emotional feeling for it, and its ancillary community-building attributes. The steps to enacting a ritual are remembered; although the meaning behind those steps—why the ritual steps have been taken—are not necessarily understood.

The R family must have worked together to effect various rituals, but there is little sense of it in Katherine's narratives. Outside community participation in R family ritual observance is only slightly visible in the narratives. Nevertheless, the community did join in for the christenings, weddings and funerals. Ritual observance certainly did bind the R family together, but Katherine intimates that there was little satisfaction or enjoyment in their group ritual observance. We gain this insight from the simple fact that, in every potential instance to include such a statement, it remains unvoiced. It simply does not occur to Katherine to say something inaccurate about R family practices. R family identity was tied, deliberately and forcefully, to the notion of progressiveness: "we were not superstitious." It was frankly stated and consistently stated by Maria, the matriarch, to her daughters that the R family did not hold with Old World beliefs ("superstitions"). And yet, Katherine was clearly touched by the beliefs of her grandmother, who was nothing if not Old World "superstitious." "It is the peasants really, who establish rituals…or invent or remember or believe in them," Katherine says, without explaining who "the peasants" are or ever were.

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[1] The Ukrainian-Canadian community was sometimes referred to as a "bloc community." "Bloc community" is a term that denotes the social and economic center for Ukrainian immigrant life on the Canadian prairie. Here, James W. Darlington explains the derivation of the settlement style. "In Ukraine community life centered around the *selo*, or village, where farmers lived and churches and various services were located. In Canada the township and range survey system and the federal government's refusal to suspend the section of the Homestead Act that stated that each homesteader must reside on his or her homestead hampered the immigrants' attempt to re-create their traditional settlement pattern. Rather than acquiesce entirely to the situation, the settlers located rural central place-functions at the corners of four adjoining survey sections, thereby achieving the maximum amount of clustering possible given the circumstances. Sometimes a less compact settlement form evolved. In either case, however, the result was a hamlet that served as the focus for both social and economic activities in the neighbourhood" (Darlington 1991: 73).

[2] In her research and writing, anthropologist/folklorist Barbara Myerhoff asks "how the self accommodates to a story [a personal narrative], possibly undermining it but certainly developing in relationship to it. For Myerhoff this human/cultural process of finding stories within stories, or storymaking through stories, was an example of reflexivity, the capacity to arouse consciousness of ourselves as we see the actions of ourselves and others" (Prell 1989 250-251). Ethnologist David Jacobson uses the term "reflexivity" in a related vein. He refers to reflexivity as "the ethnographer's recounting of and reflection upon his or her experience" (Jacobson 1991: 116).

[3] Katherine's experience would have been of Ukrainian-Canadian rite of passage rituals, somewhat truncated versions of their original Bukovynian counterparts. In the case of birth rituals, Katherine seems to have observed the acceptance of the newborn baby as a member of the community and the purification of the mother.

[4] According to the Ukrainian scholar and folklorist, Zenon Kuzela, in speaking of "folk customs and rites related to family life" in 19th century Ukrainian areas, birth rituals were rather uniform throughout. He states that "Three moments are important here: (1) the actual birth; (2) the acceptance of the newborn baby as a member of the community; and (3) the purification of the mother and the midwife" (Kubijovyc1963: 333).

"The aim of all the ceremonies is to protect the child from danger and to ensure for the new member of the family and the community the best conditions of life. To protect the child from the 'evil eye' and from witchcraft, and to ease birth, pregnant women conceal their condition for as long as possible....For every birth, even the easiest, a respected older woman (*baba*) is called in at the last moment to act as midwife....The newborn child is carefully protected from all evil; the *baba* welcomes it with the sign of the cross and a special prayer, and cuts the umbilical cord on an axe if the child is a boy, or on a distaff if it is a girl. She then introduces the child to the family, places it under the stove, touches its head to the mouth of the oven, or its feet to the crossbeam, and finally, wraps

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it in a sheepskin coat and puts it in the corner of honor (*pokuttia*)… (Kubijovyc 1963: 333).

[After the ritual bathing of the child,] the family ceremony begins, which is completed with the family reception and the church baptism, which usually takes place on the same day, for until the baptism the mother does not dare to nurse the child. The *kumy* or godparents, who are usually named by the father from among his most respected relatives, carry the child to baptism. No one declines this invitation, for to be a godparent (*kumuvaty*) is a great honor and a service to God...(Kubijovyc1963: 333).

Each *kum* prepares for the christening by bringing a piece of white linen, like that in a blanket or a tablecloth, and a christening candle. From this cloth (*kryzhma*) the mother will make the child's first shirt, which the child will wear only after the christening. And before the christening, she can only put the child in a cocoon-like wrap. This *kryzhma* was wrapped around a candle and fixed with a ribbon… (Kozholianko 1999: 60)

The godparents bring bread and the baptismal cloth to the baptism and their first duties are to drink a toast and make prescribed wishes. Then the *baba* washes the child in 'untouched' water and wraps it…and presents it to the godfather….After the baptism, the family reception is held, at which neighbors and friends gather with gifts…(Kubijovyc 1963: 334)

The third of the customs connected with a birth is the purification of the mother and the *baba*, who are considered to be unclean after the birth. Before christening, the mother of the child was not allowed to eat meat or butter …and no one could eat with her (could sit at the same table), because she was considered unclean. She couldn't bake ritual bread, kiss the *Bible*, icons or crosses. (Kozholianko 1999: 59)

In the purification ceremony, the hands of the mother and the *baba* are washed with 'untouched' water in which sprigs of guelder rose, lovage, rue, and periwinkle are placed crosswise; ritual prayers are said and a candle is burned. After this ceremony, the *baba* is bade farewell and is paid…she receives only the prescribed ritual gifts." (Kubijovyc 1963: 334-35)

No doubt Katherine's grandmother, Elena, would have been familiar with some or all of these birth rituals, but Katherine's mother, Maria, by virtue of the deprivations of pioneer life and rapid change in a new country, seems to have followed the ritual of having her infants christened. According to Katherine, godparents were invited to a christening ceremony which took place at church or at home. A priest performed the purification of the mother—a religious version of the folk ritual, the woman was blessed and therefore rendered clean again—and the child was blessed and welcomed into the community.

[5] Maria is isolated from the rest of the women in the family attending church, from the women in the church with whom she would normally be standing, and from the rest of the congregants, namely the men.

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[6] The folk belief also held that after a woman had given birth, she was unclean and had to be ritually purified.

[7] In his autobiography, Katherine's elder brother Sam, five years her senior, writes of the superfluity of babies in the R family—
"I don't remember Mrs. R [the midwife] ever having been paid for her services, although she may have received some compensation in eggs, chickens or other food. Money was always hard to come by, and my father had a habit of saying, 'Poor man, big family,' when the subject of money arose. We older children would then grumble to each other that it was not our fault that we had such a big family."
"Pioneer Life on the Farm: Early Days," unpublished autobiography by Sam R, Fort Wayne, Indiana 1982, p. 6.

[8] The standard Ukrainian word for the sheepskin coat that Katherine describes is *kozhukh*.

[9] Because the details of this first encountered wedding ritual are sketchy, I will outline the basic features of a 19th century Bukovynian wedding with Katherine's narrative of her sister Nancy's wedding [Katherine (Rite of Passage: Marriage) #2]. No doubt Uncle George's Ukrainian-Canadian wedding bore some relationship ritualistically to Ukrainian (Bukovynian) weddings in the Old Country. Nancy R's wedding certainly did.

[10] The wedding of Katherine's Uncle George R, at least the celebration part of it, took place on October 13th, 1913. Katherine was three years old at the time of the wedding.

[11] Nancy's wedding was the first (and only) Ukrainian-Canadian wedding to take place in the R family. What follows is an abbreviated description of Bukovynian and Bukovynian-Canadian wedding rituals, some features of which were included in Nancy's wedding.

It is interesting to note that "important life cycle rituals like the wedding extend their ritual power beyond the couple, the family, and even the village, to influence the course of nature. In Ukrainian belief, the wedding is a central rite in the life of a human being and all people must be wed" (Kononenko 1999: 6). The elements in the wedding ritual followed a series of steps: the match-making ceremony, the betrothal ceremony, preparations for the wedding, the church wedding and then the ritual wedding.

When a young man fell in love with a young woman and wanted to marry her, he would ask two respected elders (*starosty* or matchmakers) to come with him to make a request to the parents for the woman's hand in marriage. When the match-making was arranged, the parents of the groom had the priest of their church announce the engagement three times at three different church services (banns); then the date was set for the wedding. (Ternoway 1983: 35)

[Here and below, I have paraphrased Ternoway's description of a Bukovynian-Canadian wedding and added commentary from Kozholianko, who writes of 19th century Bukovynian weddings.]

The parents arranged for the dowry and the wedding. Two weeks before the wedding, the prospective groom and his bride would start inviting their guests to the wedding, going from house to house with a horse and buggy...then they would choose their groomsmen, bridesmaids...matron of honor (*matka*) and bestman (*bat'ko*). They would also decide about the musicians for both homes (the wedding was held at the homes of both sets of parents). (Ternoway 1983: 35)

The corsages for the guests were made ahead of time by the bridesmaids and relatives. A flower was sewn on the groom's hat, the sewing begun by his mother was passed on to the matron of honor and then on to other relatives, who each took turns in sewing. Singing appropriate wedding songs accompanied this activity. The day before the wedding, the gates were decorated by the groomsmen with pine trees, pine bows and paper streamers. (Ternoway 1983: 35-36)

On the day of the wedding the matron of honor would adorn the groomsmen with shawls, to be worn over the right shoulder. Corsages were pinned on the left. The wedding party accompanied the bride and groom to church, but the parents did not go to the church. On the groom's side, the groomsmen brought a gun and would shoot straight up in the air saying, "*veevat*" several times as the wedding party proceeded to and from church. During the church ceremony, the couple knelt on a [ritual] towel (*rushnyk*), which was brought by the matron of honor. Crowns of myrtle and other flowers woven into wreaths were held over the couple's heads by the matron of honor and the groom's bestman. (Ternoway 1983: 36)

After the marriage ceremony, the groom, matron of honor, and groomsmen all went to the groom's home for a meal. The bride, with the groom's bestman and her bridesmaids went to her home. Each set of parents met their children with bread and salt and gave them their blessings with the musicians playing. (Ternoway 1983: 36)

After dinner, the groom came with his entourage to the bride's place to take her home with him. While the musicians played, the entourage was met by the bride's parents who extended their blessings with bread, salt and wine. The table was cleared and the bride was asked to join the groom and preparations began for gift-giving. Before gift-giving began, the groomsmen tried to cover the bride with a shawl she had worn over her shoulders during the church ceremony. The bridesmaids tried to protect her from being covered. Ultimately, the groomsmen paid the bridesmaids and the bride's head was covered with the shawl. After that, she wore the shawl at all times. (Ternoway 1983: 36)

Gift-giving began with the parents first, followed by relatives and guests. After donations, the groomsmen bought off each of the bridesmaids by giving her money to her satisfaction. In the meantime, a sister or brother of the bride sat on the trunk [which

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contained the bride's trousseau] given the bride by her parents. The groom had to give them money before he could take the trunk. When this was done, the groomsmen, singing, carried the trunk to the waiting wagon or vehicle. (Ternoway 1983: 36)

According to Kozholianko, "the mother of the young wife sits on the dowry chest (the place of the bride) and won't give away her key to this chest until the groom gives a pair of boots to the bride" (2001: 156).

In the meantime, the guests gathered at the gate to stop the groom and the bride. The groom had to be prepared to give them a gallon of wine before they cleared the way. (Ternoway 1983: 36)

Kozholianko notes that in the 19th century, "the groom and the bride sat on a horse and tried to leave from the compound. Behind them on a horse-drawn cart are the wedding parents [the *matko* and the *bat'ko*]. On the cart, they have stockpiled the bride's possessions. At the gate, the groom is stopped by the young men and girls and they demand a ransom [*pereima*]. The groom, still seated on the horse, gives every man a bottle of *horilka* and a *kolach* and gives every girl sweets or a cake. And this ransom ritual symbolizes the groom's respect towards his friends, the young men with whom he hung out and the girls whom he met at evening dances and church celebrations. Finally the road is free and the newlyweds (and the caravan of young with their relatives) go to the house of the groom" (2001: 159).

When the groom and his bride arrived at his home, the groomsmen stopped at the gate singing. The parents met them with bread, salt and wine and gave them their blessings. The musicians played; the groomsmen carried the bride's trunk into the house; the wedding entourage was led into the house by the bestman who carried a white flag. The bride and groom went three times around the table. After the third time they were seated and a meal followed. (Ternoway 1983: 37)

After the meal, the groom took the bride to dance, they were followed by the matron of honor, bestman, bridesmaids and groomsmen. The dance was held on a homemade platform decorated with streamers and pine trees. (Ternoway 1983: 37)

After all guests had finished eating, the gift-giving began, starting again with the parents. Singing accompanied the festivities. After the gift-giving, some guests stayed overnight, while others left for their homes. The next morning, the bride was asked to sweep the floor and to carry a pail of water from the outside well, but her efforts would be frustrated by guests or family members in an effort to test her. After all the celebration, the couple either stayed with the groom's parents or started their own home with the help of their parents. (Ternoway 1983: 38)

[12] Nancy's wedding took place on the 14th of July in 1926.

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[13] "The customs and rites of the autumn [calendar ritual] cycle show an emphasis towards "marriage and magic " (Kubijovyc 1963: 332). And "after *Vodokhryshchi* (January 19th) a new marriage period begins which lasts until the fast (Lent)…" (Kubijovyc 1963: 324).

[14] It is difficult to know when Katherine would have learned that a woman's covered head was a symbol of her married status. She seems not to have understood this while living at home with her parents. Katherine, who reads widely, may have come upon this insight in her reading about women of other cultures.

[15] Katherine has read the Robert Massie book, *Peter the Great: His Life and World* (1980), more than once and identifies herself as a Slavic soul with roots in the noble endeavors of this great leader of Russia.

[16] In a Bukovynian wedding, the parents of the bride and groom did not attend the ceremony in church. They remained at home waiting for the wedding party to arrive from church.

[17] The influenza pandemic of 1918-19, also called the Spanish influenza epidemic, was the most severe influenza outbreak of the 20th century and, in terms of total numbers of deaths, among the most devastating pandemics in human history.

Influenza is caused by a virus that is transmitted from person to person through air-borne respiratory secretions. An outbreak can occur if a new strain of influenza virus emerges against which the population has no immunity. The influenza epidemic of 1918-1919—which is more precisely called a pandemic because it affected populations throughout the world—resulted from such an occurrence. The cause of the extreme mortality of this pandemic is not known.

The pandemic occurred in three waves. The first apparently originated during World War I in Camp Funston, Kansas, U.S., in early March 1918. American troops who arrived in western Europe in April are thought to have brought the virus with them, and by July it had spread to Poland. The first wave of influenza was comparatively mild; however, during the summer a more lethal type of disease was recognized, and this form fully emerged in August 1918. Pneumonia often developed quickly, with death usually coming two days after the first indications of the flu….The third wave of the epidemic occurred in the following winter, and by the spring the virus had run its course. In the two later waves about half the deaths were among 20-to 40-year olds, an unusual mortality-age pattern for influenza….

Outbreaks of the flu occurred in nearly every inhabited part of the world, first in ports, then spreading from city to city along the main transportation routes. *(The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 2002 (6): 312)

[18] According to historian Orest T. Martynowych, "To begin farming, [Ukrainian] settlers needed capital for seed, livestock and implements…..As a result, only the wealthiest male

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immigrants, or those blessed with single adult sons, did not spend a few years in off-farm work. The latter entailed leaving wives and children to look after the homestead, while the men searched for work on railway construction, in the mines or lumber camps or as farm hands and harvest labourers on large commercial farms" (Martynowych, 1991: 81-82).

[19] Gus's funeral preparation shared some characteristics with its earlier 19th century Bukovynian funerary precedents. Kozholianko speaks at some length about Bukovynian funerary rituals.

With the death of the relative, all family efforts were directed to prepare for the funeral. It was a mystical-magical ritual. At the time of death, the body of the deceased was washed, even though he might have taken a bath before death. This was a ritual cleaning (bath). For this ritual bath (dipping into the water), the closest friends were invited. First, they cut the nails on the hands and on the feet and then they washed the body (Kozholianko 2001: 351).

In early times, the deceased man was washed by an elder man and the deceased woman was washed by an elder woman. But in the 19th century, in Bukovyna, the practice began that certain people from the community were responsible for washing the body. Usually it was a poor person, from the poorer part of the community and they would receive money and presents for this work. Sometimes [they would receive] the clothes of the deceased whom they washed, from the family. The water, which was left after the washing, assumed magical powers. It is believed that whoever has this water can influence other people in mystical ways. Therefore, immediately after the washing they tried to throw away the water at places that are not accessible to other people. The straw (under the body during the washing), the comb and towel were burned after the washing, put into the fire, or put close to the deceased in his/her coffin for burial with him/her (2001: 351).

As a rule, elder people had their funeral clothes as well as their coffin [already prepared]. This coffin was filled with grain which annually was renewed. It was believed that an empty coffin (*truna*) will cause the owner to die (a magical belief). In northern Bukovyna, the dead man's clothes were changed and new shoes were put on him. It was believed that new shoes were necessary for his feet when he crossed the fiery river (2001: 353).

In Bukovyna, in the village of Mamaievtsi, it was a custom to make a funeral with the dead wearing their marriage clothes. A proverb notes, " That in which you were married, you were buried" (2001: 355).

Before burial the dead person is placed on a bench under the windows with his head toward the icons and his feet toward the door; a dish is placed beside the body so that the soul may have something to drink. There the body lies for three days. Mourners sit up all night with the body (Klymasz 1992: 40).

Relatives give the grave-diggers the dimensions [for the burial pit]. A bucket filled with apples, baked goods and sweets are given to the priest to bless. The bucket will be left in the church as a remembrance for the priests and for others who come to the church.... From the moment of death to the funeral, relatives, friends and neighbors come to the house of the deceased, to bid farewell. They come with candles. Candles are put in candle holders and burned. And they also bring coins, which are put on the chest of the deceased where his/her hands are crossed. (Kozholianko 2001: 357).

Mirrors were sometimes covered to avoid having the deceased appear in the mirror (Klymasz 1992: 45).

The priest comes [to the home of the deceased]. The coffin is carried out of the house with the [deceased's] feet first, so that the deceased doesn't return [to the house] and it doesn't hurt the dwellers of this place. As the coffin is carried over the threshold, it is touched to the threshold three times so that the deceased does not come back. [This symbolizes that there will be no return to the house for the deceased.]. After that, the door to the house is shut quickly. One of the relatives has to stay in the house for a couple of minutes and this is done to reinforce the fact that the dead person is gone and that he or she is not welcome there any more. [eg. No one wants to see the deceased now: "go away."] (Kozholianko 2001: 358).

When they take the deceased from the house, they must close all doors and gates to not allow death to come back into the house (Podilla 1994: 229).

One of the important parts of the funeral was keening (lamenting) for the dead person. [Only the women of the family of the deceased 'wail' for the dead, although at times other women who are especially skillful are invited.] The woman who does the keening will not hold sorrow and pain (the emptiness) of losing the deceased to herself. By keening, she will share her grief with the other mourners, stirring feelings in them to understand her difficult situation (Kozholianko 2001: 372).

It was believed that that the living had to grieve and lament so that the pain and regrets were shared with others (not kept to/for themselves). Keening was partially inspired or motivated by the fear of the dead. But at the same time [it was inspired by] feeling grief for the deceased. The chosen language of laments involved endearing descriptions, so diminutive [forms were] used. The lamenters stood by the deceased or over the grave, and they cried and wailed....Laments had to take place in the presence of other people (in public). If not, the community might condemn the absence of these laments....Lamenters had to bow and lean over the table or bench or coffin, those objects upon which the coffin was placed while the deceased was still in the house, before the funeral. (2001: 379-80).

Keening was always addressed to people attending the funeral. The family had to do the keening in someone's presence. After the funeral...if keening was not conducted enough or did not occur, it could cause negative opinions from the community. Keening consisted of talking, singing, mourning, screaming, almost crying, and talking really,

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really fast. When keening occurred, it performed a dramatic function, for spiritual excitement and concerns were communicated to the listeners without the keener's being aware of the results. Often keening was conducted with bowing and falling on the table, benches or hearth. The keener would fall in these places because the deceased had been there before the funeral (2001: 380).

For the funeral procession, the cross would be carried following the coffin and special mournful songs are sung. After burial, the family of the deceased had a dinner for those who attended the funeral. The funeral dinner included boiled wheat (*pshenytsa*) that was served first to commemorate the discovery of wheat long ago as a useful food for human sustenance (Klymasz 1992: 45).

At the end of the dinner (after burial), each guest received a candle, which was burned. It was believed that the light from these candles would show the soul of the deceased the road to the other world (Kozholianko 2001: 370).

Regarding beliefs about the soul, it was believed that the soul stayed among the living for nine days. Forty days after death, the soul is still wandering around, while decisions are made up there whether it goes to heaven or hell. Once the soul goes to the other world, it can not return [to this world] (Kozholianko 2001: 370).

There was a belief that if the soul needed something, it communicated with the relatives through dreams. People still believed that the soul could still come back to the house. The soul could bring them conflicts and fights, which it had had during life. This is why the dead person was not allowed to be by itself during the funeral, because evil power could direct its soul to do damage among his/her relatives. That is why the first night, after the funeral, the light stayed on for the whole night, so that the soul could see how to come back and how to get to the right room in the house. There was food and drink and water left for the soul on the table. (2001: 372-73).

A commemorative dinner [for the deceased] was held many times during the year, on the 9th day, on the 40th day, on the anniversary of the death, and on special commemorative days, such as *Risdvo-Koliada*, Easter, and *Providna nedilia* (2001: 392).

[20] The R family, that is, Maria and John, when they built their *khata*, their first (semi-permanent) home in Canada, built it according to traditional and ritual guidelines, with the front door facing south, the *mala khata* (little room) on the west and the *velyka khata* (great room) on the east side with a storage space (*siny*) between the two rooms. The family's daily activity took place in the *mala khata* and around the *pich* (large clay stove) which was built into this room and used for cooking, for heat and as a sleeping platform for the younger children. All this is to say that the Rs brought their Old World architectural knowledge and spiritual belief with them to the New World.

The *velyka khata* (great room), which faced east and south, was the room in which the icons were hung. This room was reserved for special events, for guests, and for the presentation of the dead before burial. It was a room one entered in a reverent manner.

[21] Kuzela states that "The coffin is usually made gratis on the day after death by the neighbors of maple or pine. Among other things, these woods are believed to drive away the spirits and to stop vampires" (Kubijovyc 1963: 338)

[22] Katherine interview, September 18, 1993, page 3. On Elena's refusal to learn English.

[23] Gus's death was the first death for the immediate R family. Thus, the ritual observance surrounding his funeral was something Katherine could watch at close hand. Perhaps, by the time of his death, Katherine had witnessed the funerals of neighbors, but she makes no reference to funerals outside the family.

[24] In 1920, Katherine's grandmother Elena was 59 years old. Elena was born August 29, 1861 in the village of Chornivka, Bukovyna.

[25] Elena's grandson George noted that Elena, "a very religious woman," marked time by Ukrainian calendar ritual events.

[26] Katherine uses the term "we" to refer to the R family in general. The sense is that the family did this or the family did that, but she does not mean that she, herself, necessarily participated. Never in her conversations with me, did Katherine indicate that she had been caroling in the community with her siblings. As a small girl, she certainly watched her three older brothers go out to carol. By the time Katherine's younger sisters were caroling with their church group, as sister Alice mentions, Katherine was no longer a child living at home.

[27] Katherine and her husband traveled to and around Mexico on a number of occasions. She loved the color and exuberance of Mexican design and was a keen observer of Mexican cultural and religious practices.

[28] In his memoir, Sam R, Katherine's older brother, writes of Christmas caroling from homestead to homestead: "About dusk, we boys would dress warmly and start out on an evening of caroling, but the girls and smaller children were not permitted to go out in this severe winter weather. Sometimes a parent would accompany the little ones to the first stop of the route, and then bring them back home.

We started out walking to the home of the neighbors on the south, singing Ukrainian carols in front of their living room window. The father would welcome us into the house, where we sang several more carols. The mother would serve us holiday treats and the father occasionally gave us a jigger of home-made whiskey to warm us up and a coin or two to put in our pockets. Then his sons would join us and we would go on to the next house.

We carried a paper star we had made, with a candle inside. We would light the candle when we came to a house. As we progressed we would meet other carolers; some of them would join us, some of our group would leave, so we didn't always end up with the same boys we had started out with.

The snow would be deep, drifted high in some places, shallow in others. We did not follow the road from house to house; we would cut across the fields. If the snow was crusted, we would try to see if we could walk lightly over the crust without breaking it. We kept going until midnight and would return home at one o'clock, tired and ready for a bite to eat and a warm bed. Before we went to sleep, we counted our nickels and dimes over again, although we had carefully kept track of exactly how much money we had acquired" (Sam R., 1982: 36-37).

[29] The Soda Lake community consisted of former Bukovynians, Romanians, Galicians, Germans and Anglo-Canadians.

[30] According to Rena Jeanne Hanchuk, who has conducted research among Ukrainian-Canadians in Alberta and written about their medical folk rituals, "colours also have a symbolic significance in healing….Red is considered one of the most powerful colours. Evil spirits and the diseases they wreak find the colour most obnoxious" (Hanchuk 1999: 75).

[31] According to Kylymnyk, "On the first day of Easter, all members of the family washed with the *krashanka* [solid colored Easter egg] [in the water basin]. The housewife put several eggs in a bowl of water and threw a small coin into it and everyone washed in this water, one-by-one. They believed that when they washed with the *krashanka*, their skin will be healthy, the same as a *krashanka*—red and rich. The girl who wants to marry, if she washes first with the *krashanka*, then soon after Easter she'll marry and be happy and healthy" (Kylymnyk 1962: 98-99).

[32] The R family homestead was two miles from the church the family attended, that is, St. Demitrius Ruthenian Greek Orthodox Church of Luzan. It was also two miles from the second, newer Pruth Church built in 1932.

[33] Katherine's elder brother, Sam, makes note of this Easter custom in his memoir: "I must have had my mind on all those good things to eat, because I do not remember much of the [Easter] morning services. I remember more clearly the afternoon celebration, when we went back to church and were permitted to ring the bells as often and as loudly as we wished" (Sam R., 1982: 34).

[34] I do not mean to suggest that Zelanko composed his own "music" with the church bells. It was traditional for the bells to be rung with a slower rhythm for funerals and, no doubt, to be rung more brightly for festive occasions.

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[35] Voropai, who writes of 19th century rituals in what is now central Ukraine, notes that "on Easter every villager tries to grab the rope several times and ring the church bell, because it will bring happiness and furthermore, they'll have a good crop of buckwheat....On Easter Day they ring the bells for the whole day" (Voropai 1958: 411).

[36] As an adult and at this writing, Katherine is a pantheist. She is a pantheist in the sense that she believes all living things—flora and fauna—have a spirit. Katherine, on occasion has spoken of her belief, usually in the context of her house plants. She is loath to abandon any plant, regardless of its health, for the spirit of the green must be respected and nurtured.

[37] On June 2nd, 2005, as I read portions of my post-defense dissertation to Katherine in her San Francisco solarium, she recalled that as a child of five or six she was taken to a fear-healer. Katherine noted that she had been troubled by nightmares, waking in the night screaming. Maria took her to Mrs. L's mother, a known healer in the community, who after prayers or incantations poured "something" into a pan over Katherine's head. Whatever Mrs. L's mother did, it was successful. Katherine's nightmares stopped.

It is doubly extraordinary that Katherine could share this memory. By her own account, Katherine had not thought of this incident for "years." And the fact that Maria had resorted to a fear-healer for her daughter, flies in the face of family protestations against Old World (folk) practices. Clearly, in the early years of R family life, Maria used folk practices and beliefs to aid her and her children, regardless of how deeply (or shallowly) she believed in the practices.

Nancy R

Nancy is the eldest daughter in a family of eleven siblings. She was born in 1908, three years after her parents had moved from their *burde*i (1903-05) into their two-room *khata* (1905). Nancy was preceded in birth by three brothers—Al, Sam and Bill. In her early years, Nancy would have been witness to her parents' interaction with their Old World culture in their new homeland. She participated in Ukrainian-Canadian birth, marriage and funeral rituals, as well as calendar rituals that unfolded in the context of family, and in their immediate Ukrainian-Canadian community. Hers was a window upon the R family's recession from their Bukovynian village culture and their adoption of western, Anglo-Canadian ways. In her narratives, Nancy elaborates upon rite of passage rituals in the family and the celebration of Christmas, *Iordan*, and Easter.

Nancy was the third R sister I interviewed. I flew to Edmonton in May, 1995, expressly to get to know Nancy and to draw her out about R family heritage. Unlike her sisters, Nancy had remained in Canada. She had married a local Ukrainian-Canadian suitor at the age of nineteen and assumed, in gradual succession, the roles of farm wife, mother and political activist.

Nancy's black hair has grayed and thinned, but her teal-gray eyes give her face a youthful vigor. Reputedly the best cook in the family, Nancy learned to be quick about the kitchen. Her hands fly, the dishes fly, and although the attrition rate of cups and dinner plates is high, there are twice as many delicate dumplings, of unimaginable lightness, in the serving bowl, than in most kitchens. Nancy laughs about the days when faced with feeding a large and hungry threshing crew, she would toss together ten pies at a time.

In the R family, the eldest boy Alex, who showed great aptitude with his studies, was sent on at age fourteen—first to Vegreville for the eighth grade. He proceeded forward on his own merits to Edmonton and Calgary for high school and normal school, and finally to Chicago and the University of Chicago—for further education. The second boy, Sam, was designated to take over the farm and was absent from school classes often to help with the farm, but when he and his father began to clash, he was sent into the world to secure his own fortune, which, ultimately, he did. The third boy, Bill, attended school consistently and was given his own farm in the vain hope that he might take over the R family farm. He became a school administrator and a hotelier, but not a farmer. Through the changing situations of various R siblings, farm work needed to be maintained and Nancy became her father's helper, to her and her mother's chagrin[1].

Singled out among her sisters, Nancy worked side-by-side with her father and brothers, when they were home and available for work. Like her second brother, Sam, she missed a great deal of school as a result of her heavy farm work load. Though Nancy's mother fought hard on her behalf, her father refused to be convinced that his daughter needed to attend school regularly. The result of all of this can be seen in Nancy's fierce belief that education is of tantamount importance. She is haunted by the battle lost over her education. Nevertheless, Nancy became an activist, an advocate for farmers' rights, a public debater and a Socialist political thinker.[2] In 1953, she ran for a seat in the Canadian Parliament on the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation ticket from her riding in the Vegreville district.[3] She made a credible showing, but did not win the election (Alex R. 2002: 80.). Nancy continues to pen spirited letters to the editor of *The Calgary Herald* newspaper and *The Edmonton Journal* on behalf of Alberta's senior citizens.

Initially and throughout Nancy's narratives, she maintains that the R family did not embrace or observe Old World village rituals and beliefs, which she, and more importantly, her mother, dismissed. Instead, she chooses to address the perceived failings of institutions, such as the church. Social injustice is more to the point for Nancy. Nevertheless, in her narratives she inadvertently describes the shadow observance of Ukrainian-Canadian ritual within the R family and contributes to the over-all expression of family identity.

Personal Narrative: Nancy (Rite of Passage: Birth) #1

Virtually, Nancy's first comments regarding the family's ritual observation are "we were never indoctrinated…Mother was critical of the church…." Thus, she infers that the family's sense of social justice has kept it free of the church's teachings.

> 5 May 1995, pg. 2—Christening
> NR: Another thing [regarding religion], we were never indoctrinated. ...Mother was critical of the church—that it wasn't doing enough to educate people.
>
> *MJ: All of you were baptized, I'm sure.*
>
> NR: Yes, but in those days, you'd be called a heathen if you weren't baptized. You'd be ostracized. It was one of those things that you did, whether you agreed with it or not. It was pressure from the community and the church.
>
> *MJ: [For the women] Once you were pregnant, you couldn't go to the church. And then when you had the baby, the baby came into the church first and then you were allowed to come into the church. Is that so?*
>
> NR: Yes! That's something that my mother didn't like. She was angry about that. She was outspoken about many things. She thought, "it's as if you have sinned because you had this baby! What about the father [of the baby]?" There was a different attitude towards men and towards women. It used to be that the woman comes into the alcove [the porch] of the church and she sits there in winter cold waiting for the priest to come and bless her so she can come into the church.
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In her narrative, Nancy refers to her and her mother's resistance to church and clerical authority.[4] The two concur in their conviction that the church is "not doing enough to educate" the Ukrainian-Canadian parishioner. This is an injustice. But whereas Katherine, whom we have seen in the previous section, feels that church ritual plays itself out as injustice experienced by her mother; Nancy sees church ritual as something that propagates social injustice, for it does not endeavor to educate.

In part, because of this injustice which Nancy suggests the R family is aware of, for Nancy, the family has not succumbed to the domination, to the "indoctrination," of the church. It would seem that Nancy equates an adherence to religious ritual and belief[5] with naivete that less well-educated, more gullible Old World-types are prone. This belief cripples them. And indeed, Nancy speaks to a certain sentiment among Ukrainian-Canadian intellectuals, that the old and backward ways must be cast off if prosperity is to follow in the New World.[6] She undoubtedly acquired this view while growing up, for she sees herself as being in philosophical agreement with her mother, a strongly political and socially active woman in her own right.[7] Although Nancy does not reject all Ukrainian-Canadian ritual observances outright, she seems to look upon them as highly suspect. Nancy is adamant—she uses the word "never"— that neither she, nor the rest of the R family have been persuaded by the church to adopt beliefs and concomitantly, traditional ways of ordering their lives.

The word "indoctrinated" is an unusual term in the context of Nancy's narrative. It hints of usage such as "Communist indoctrination." Nancy does not employ the word in its first dictionary meaning, 'to teach or educate." Instead, she associates it with alien ideology, referring to the word's second meaning, "to cause to be impressed and usually ultimately imbued with a partisan or sectarian opinion, point of view or principle" (Webster 1961: 1153). For Nancy, "indoctrination" is a political term. Doubtless, it comes from Nancy's later involvement as an activist for farmers' rights within provincial politics in Alberta. In her subsequent reading and in her public debates, she would have encountered this sort of vocabulary. Nancy reaches forward into her adult political career to label something from her childhood.

Nancy's distaste for priests and for religious ceremony is probably not only a legacy of her mother's attitudes, but also may have roots in the local religious upheaval that she might have observed. The split among parishioners at the Soda Lake pioneer church, which occurred from 1928 onwards, went all the way down to the school yard, with children battling children over their parents' opinions. Some parishioners wanted a Ukrainian priest, others wanted to keep their Russian priest.[8] Nancy married in 1926 and moved to a farm some thirty miles to the southeast of Soda Lake, but she was no doubt aware of the divisive religious-political debate going on there. Having heard her mother criticize priests[9] and later having observed the community's discord over religious matters, Nancy would have come away with mixed feelings about religious issues.

In her narrative, Nancy attributes the R's adherence to church baptism to community (and clerical) pressure,[10] not to any feeling for the importance of baptism. Instead, her narrative focus is upon social inequity: "There was a different attitude towards men and towards women," she says. And Nancy repeats the words that she attributes to her mother: "It's as if you have sinned because you had this baby! What about the father [of the baby]?" On the one hand, Nancy implies that the priests and the church took advantage of the guileless homesteader. On the other hand, Nancy notes that the world was unfair to women. She uses the words of her mother for she essentially agrees with her. It would seem that her mother's outrage is the root source of Nancy's own value set.

In her personal narrative, Nancy does not linger on the ritual steps of christening a new child, of welcoming it into the religious community of which, at the time, she was a part. Rather, Nancy questions the activity of the church. This questioning would seem to be the point of her narrative. Indeed, the narrative is less a reflection of ritual christenings taking place in her family and in the surrounding Ukrainian-Canadian community, than a serious and pointed disquisition on a family's intellectual stand. For Nancy, community and church pressure and the desire not to be called names, such as "heathen," kept the R family going through the motions of a ritual which held no meaning for them.

Personal Narrative: Nancy (Rite of Passage: Birth) #2

> 26 May 1995, Tape #1, (#164-)—"I was Godmother."
> NR: I do remember a christening,[11] not in our home, in the L home. And I was godmother to the Ls.[12] Because we were the witnesses to the L family and the Kapitski's were witnesses to our family. I do remember that mother said that we were godmother to the L children.
>
> *MJ: How old would you have been?*
>
> NR: About ten....So we had a Russian priest and he was...the L's had an old house [an old *khata*]. And they cleaned it, painted it, white washed it, it was sort

> of a lime thing. And they white washed everything and gave it to this priest and his family moved in there. And he was living in that house when they had a christianing there.[13] And I was godmother. And I do remember that he pulled out of his pocket a very white handkerchief. I don't think that our clothes, white clothes, were that white.....

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Although she expresses reservations around the details of the christening ceremony, Nancy is technically aware of how the christening works. She describes her own participation, at the age of about ten, in a christening. Nancy has been asked to be a godparent to one of the neighbor's children. As she describes being a godmother, Nancy is disarmingly direct. The point of the narrative would seem to be her child-person's fascination with the whiteness of a handkerchief, her having never seen such whiteness before. Nancy shares her childlike wonder at the discovery of "white." In her narrative, Nancy's image of the setting for the christening—the "old" *khata* fixed up for the priest— and her being struck by the whiteness of the priest's handkerchief are foremost.

Thus, we see that Nancy has a keen eye for local color. It is not the ceremony or her role in it that captures her attention. It is a personal item and the realization that she has seen sparkling whiteness on the side of a *khata*, but not in an object of clothing. Her narrative has the immediacy of the ten-year old's discovery. Nancy's critical sensibility is not directed to the christening itself.

Personal Narrative: Nancy (Rite of Passage: Marriage) #1

Nancy does not recall the 1913 wedding of her father's brother, her Uncle George. We assume she would have been present at this wedding, for her younger sister, the three-year old Katherine, and both of her parents were there. However, in thinking of weddings outside of the immediate family, she does reflect upon a neighbor's wedding.

> 26 May 1995, Tape #1, (#132-)—Wedding of Kapitski girl
> *MJ: Do you remember the wedding of your Uncle George and his wife, Sanda? Do you remember going to that? There would have been a wedding celebration. You would have been about 5-years old.*

> NR: I don't remember Uncle George's wedding. I couldn't tell you. But I know that once, I did attend a wedding with my parents. I must have been older then. It was a Kapitski girl. There was a bride and a groom. And I was at the house when the parents sat down someplace, with the rest of the group...and there was this bride, and she had a wreath around her hair, with flowers and she had ribbons, long ribbons, instead of like a veil. She had these long ribbons and they were different colors. I do remember the bride.

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Nancy notes that she "must have been older then." She is still living with her parents, but no longer a child. Of all of the details of this semi-traditional wedding hosted by neighbors, Nancy remembers the bride, or rather the fact that the bride wears a "wreath around her hair, with flowers and she had ribbons, long ribbons, instead of like a veil." Perhaps Nancy has already seen Ukrainian-Canadian brides wearing white veils, for the adoption of Anglo-Canadian customs is taking place around Nancy as a youth. The point to be made is that Nancy is struck by the traditional detail. The fact that a be-ribboned wedding wreath has stayed in her memory, speaks to Nancy's sensitivity to the traditional elements of her heritage. Something was there that caused her to contemplate and to retain.

Personal Narrative: Nancy (Rite of Passage: Marriage) #2

> 11 May 1995, Tape #1—Nancy's Wedding[14]
> NR: I wasn't forced into it. I decided it myself. And then the parents got together, his parents and my parents got together… how they're going to, what they're going to do about a wedding. So, we lived about 30 miles north. In those days it was far, like 150 miles now. Those distances in old cars…we did have a car, but his parents didn't have a car. But he had a car and my father had a car, but it wasn't …I remember it was an old Chevy, but whether it was working then, I don't know.
>
> Anyway, they decided that they'd do it individually: my parents would have a wedding for me and his parents would have a wedding for him. And then he'd come and claim the bride, and I'd go back with him. You know, he had his group, his best man…and they all came. But we married in the Orthodox Church…Sich/Kolomea…it was a big church there, a Ukrainian church. I don't know why [this church was selected]…It was halfway between…and we were married there. And ah…then…

MJ: Did the whole family come to the church...?

NR: Yeah…the family…I wouldn't say the whole family, but lots of the family came to the church. And from the church, the wedding group, like the relatives…we all came to my parents' house. We had dinner there. Mother had the neighbors' help…they made arrangements about the groceries….I didn't know about that. It lasted 'til about four o'clock. And I know John wanted to go home because everybody at his place was ready to see the bride! And all that.

But we finally got off. And as we were going to leave the yard, some of the neighbor's boys…and it was a custom…they went and tied the gates so that we couldn't get out, and they asked for a ransom. [laughter] They actually did that! I was surprised. I didn't expect that. So the best man…like John sat with me…so the best man went to bargain. Imagine that! And so, finally we got out and left and came to his parents' home. They had quite a nice house. Like, my parents didn't have time to beautify the yard, or have a nice lawn. But his father had this land and they had a nice yard, and they put some trees…it was in July, so they cut down some trees and made a sort of a…what would you say…for the bride and groom, an entrance…

MJ: An arch?

NR: Sort of like an arch for the bride and groom to come and enter. So we came there. The parents, because my parents weren't religious—they'd go to church once in awhile—but they [John's parents] were religious, Catholics, they observed all the holidays…I didn't even know about those holidays until I got married. But anyway, they come out with what they call "to welcome the bride with bread and salt." So they had this nice *kolachi*. And I guess they kissed me and shook hands and all that and…and then you walked through…and all that …and the festivities started there, the same thing. And it was outdoors, because it was July and they ate outdoors. At our house it was indoors, because the old house… had a big living room or dining room or whatever you call it and I guess they put some…they made tables out of boards and the people sat around those tables that way.

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This narrative is significant for the many ways in which the details of Nancy's Ukrainian-Canadian wedding impart insights into R family identity. Nancy begins somewhat defensively, as if answering some perceived criticism that she was forced into marrying. Telling the story at a distance of nearly seventy years, Nancy underscores her youthful declaration of independence: "I decided it myself." In the face of a pressuring mother and a young woman's life of uncertainty and fear, Nancy moves forward. She has exhibited forthrightness and courage and expresses this in her narrative.

The details of planning, of setting up the actual activity around Nancy's wedding, probably falls to others in the R family, for Nancy has no recollection of this enterprise. Indeed, the parents of the prospective bride and groom, and others, traditionally do this work. Nevertheless, the historical and emotional significance of the fact that so many are working behind the scenes to facilitate a wedding that the entire community will attend, is simply not an aspect of Nancy's narrative. The trip to Edmonton to buy a white wedding dress that Katherine presents in a narrative is not part of Nancy's tableau. Nancy's narrative of her wedding incorporates material from other aspects of the ritual.

Organizing and hosting a semi-traditional Ukrainian-Canadian wedding is an important expression of family identity. It is a tie to family and community traditions that holds meaning for other family members. The R parents have consciously decided to "do the right thing" by their eldest daughter, so that the community will see that they not only know what to do when a marriage match is to be effected, but that they are able to do it in a proper manner. Such is the function of a ritual: it is as much if not more for the sake of the community and for the sake of R family identity, as it is for the sake of the bride and groom. The wedding draws together all in the Ukrainian-Canadian community; validating who they are, where they have come from, and where they are going. It provides a moment of spiritual consensus.

Regardless of what Nancy leaves out of her narrative, consciously or unconsciously, she does present the outlines of a semi-traditional Ukrainian-Canadian wedding—it is the parents who strike the bargain; after the church ceremony, the bride and groom celebrate with her family; then they celebrate with the groom's family, after, of course, some antics on the part of neighbors or other family members. Nancy's parents and the groom's parents have arranged a Ukrainian-Canadian wedding. For Nancy, it is as if the parents have come up with the novel solution of the two separate wedding dinners and other aspects of the wedding quite out of the air. Yet on some level, she is aware of the ritual gestures inside the wedding, for the language Nancy uses in her narrative would seem to indicate this. For example, the groom will come and "claim the bride." He has "his group, his best man…" and they will act in concert. The neighbor's boys demand "a ransom," and thus, the best man has to "bargain" with them. Nancy's very vocabulary alludes to some of the ritual steps that comprise a Ukrainian-Canadian wedding ritual.

In contrast to Nancy's stated "it was my decision" about her choice to marry, custom and marriage ritual dictate that bride and groom are passive participants in their own wedding. Curiously, on an interior level, Nancy is passive, even a bit disassociated from the activity around her. Her initial, somewhat defensive, narrative opening would indicate that she might have been fearful at the time, and understandably so.

In her narrative, Nancy's description of herself, of the way she maneuvered through the wedding activity, suggests that she moved as if in a trance. Nancy has no idea why the Sich-Kolomea church was chosen for the religious ceremony. Neither Nancy, nor her groom, has any connection to this church. Its choice seems to have been a practical decision made by some invisible person, turning on the issue of geographical efficacy and the presence of a priest. Nancy has no idea who, among her sisters and brothers or family friends and neighbors, might have attended the church service. She makes no note of age-equal female friends, no Maids- or Matrons-of-Honor. Indeed, if her sister Katherine, who is closest in age to Nancy, has acted as a Maid-of-Honor, Nancy omits this from her narrative, as does sister Katherine, from her own narrative which we have seen already. Nancy admits that she has no idea how the wedding feast was handled at her parents' homestead. Somehow the neighbor women and her mother got things together. One wonders whether Nancy's sisters helped with the preparations and if so, whether Nancy was cognizant of this. She does note, by way of contrast to the out-of-doors wedding feast at the groom's parents' homestead, that her own family hosted the guests around tables set up indoors, in the "old house" [15] because it had an appropriate ("big") room[16] for this. Thus, unconsciously Nancy implies that her parents' have acted in a ritually correct manner and hosted the wedding feast in the *veyka khata* (the great room), reserved for just such major ritual events.

In the face of her almost featureless description, there are details that Nancy, nevertheless, brings to the surface of her narrative with extreme clarity. John, the groom, has a car that is operational. No one else—not her father, not the groom's father— does.[17] This puts John above the other men. The church where the service takes place, although not her own familiar St. Demitrius, is Orthodox and not Catholic. John's family is (Ukrainian) Catholic. And thus, even though Nancy insists that her family does not adhere to religious mores—she derives satisfaction from the fact that the church, chosen for her, is appropriate, that is, the Orthodox church. Finally, Nancy correctly recognizes herself as the star of the show. She notes that John's family is waiting impatiently to see the new bride.

Of all the contradictory currents circulating in Nancy's narrative, the tension between what is traditional and what is not traditional is never far from the surface. We have seen that Nancy is of the opinion that the church, the priest, anything that ties her, her family, her neighbors of Ukrainian descent to the bogey-man of Old Country ritual, of peasant backwardness is to be avoided. She embraces the Anglo-Canadian custom of the white wedding dress and veil. The man Nancy will marry represents a moving away from Old Country ways as well—he has a car. He has broken with the old ways by buying Nancy an engagement ring and by promising her a honeymoon, something "unheard of," she says.[18] This is good.

As for a bit of background, regarding ritual activity around certain parts of the wedding celebration: the bride and groom must leave the home and the family of the bride and journey to that of the groom. For the bride, it is a rite of passage in every way imaginable. She is leaving her girlhood, the protection of her parents and the comforting support of her sisters and brothers. She is embarking with a stranger who will take her to a home where she will be subject to the rules of his family. She may be welcomed and treasured, or greeted with indifference and misused. In a mythical sense, this leaving-of-the-home of the bride is the moment (up to this point) most filled with uncertainty and fear for the young woman.

Ukrainian wedding ritual activity deals with this moment through jocular play-acting—the bride's kinsmen steal the bride, or refuse to let her pass until the groomsmen, or the groom's agent, pay a ransom for her. The activity communicates to the bride and to the groom, that she has economic and psychological value, that her people only reluctantly allow her to leave them. The humor of the event helps to dispel the leave-taking anxiety. The rite of passage continues to unfold with the next step, the groom's family's greeting of the bride.

There is a real reluctance, whether conscious or unconscious, on Nancy's part to recognize aspects of Ukrainian-Canadian ritual observance in her narrative. But Ukrainian-Canadian ritual rules are in play, particularly in the R family, for her wedding. For example, the demanding a ransom by young men from the R clan for the bride causes her to react with astonishment: "They actually did that! I was surprised. I didn't expect that." It is a sudden admission of the efficacy of ritual to capture and distill the sensibilities of the moment. Nancy laughs with delight and continued surprise as she shares this moment in her narrative. The feelings are still with her. As an adult narrating her story, Nancy insinuates that Ukrainian-Canadian ritual gestures are so much silliness, but her genuine reaction to the moment when the best man, as the groom's agent, must bargain for the bride, reverberates from the past to the present. Ceremonially, the rite of passage problem has been solved; the bride has moved on without ever realizing that she herself is *inside* the ritual observance, that it is working upon her. The motions of a complex ritual are being followed, but only when the "ransom" portion of the wedding ritual is enacted is there connection at a level of meaning. It is then that Nancy understands that something has been communicated to *her*.

There are further contradictory currents. John's family is religious, "they observed all the holidays," Nancy says; whereas in the R family, calendar ritual observance is dilatory at best. Nancy has reservations about her in-laws' religious devotion. But for the wedding, they have prepared her welcome with graceful ritual acts. She enters the family compound through a gateway or an arch created by freshly cut tree branches. She is greeted in the traditional Ukrainian Old Country manner with bread and salt and presumably a formulaic, spoken ritual greeting. There is a second wedding feast, this time the guests are seated outside in the lingering sunset of a July evening.[19] It was undoubtedly lovely.

What transpired at Nancy's wedding? Why has Nancy chosen not to mention her family in any specific way; after all, her wedding is a family-wide and community-wide event. Everyone is invited. Did the ritual events bind the R family together, reaffirming bonds within the family and community? One can imagine a certain amount of amusement from all present, when ransom for the bride was demanded. Perhaps, in reality, Nancy's wedding worked in just this manner, that is to bind and reaffirm. However, when filtered through the lens of Nancy's narrative, we have little sense of the other players at the wedding, and this leads us to infer that the players are isolated from others and possibly from themselves.

Personal Narrative: Nancy (Rite of Passage: Death) #1

Nancy was ten years old when her Uncle Gus died. She frames her narrative about his death in terms of warding off fear: "I was bold" and " I wasn't scared." In a sense, this is a narrative about a child's victory. Although an unsettling event, "The Death of Uncle Gus" that Nancy presents is cool—cerebral, rather than emotional— and descriptive.[20]

> 5 May 95, interview, p. 16—Death of Uncle Gus
> NR: Uncle Gus died in 1918 of Spanish influenza. And when he died, he was in the hospital in Vegreville. Mother used to wail [keened], and that scared us to death….I remember very well, they brought Uncle Gus to our farm. And he was in a box. His body was in a box. They were going to prepare the graves. In those days during the flu, you couldn't have visitors, because the flu was spreading. So they put a lantern—they had the casket on the sleigh outside, it was in winter—they put a lantern so there'd be a light all night out there.[21] I went out—I was bold— to the casket and there were little holes, little openings between the boards. They were rough cut. I put my head to it because I wanted to look inside. I wanted to see it. I wasn't scared.

> The next day, with the grave dug, we walked behind the horse-drawn sleigh, all the way to the church, over three miles. I don't remember the cold…so it must not have been too bad. It was very simple. There was no priest. People were dying right and left. That was him [Gus].

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Nancy is proud of the personal courage she evinced in order to go into the dark and try to peer into a full coffin, to see the body in the box. She is curious and her curiosity impels her forward. Yet, Nancy is somewhat outside of what is going on: the keening of her mother scares her and she assumes that it scares her other sisters and brothers. Nancy notes the family's isolation from the rest of the community: she says, "you couldn't have visitors, because the flu was spreading." And indeed, government officials, among them, the Northwest Mounted Police, actively discouraged people from visiting other homesteads.

Nancy captures certain details in her narrative that indicate that the R family is attempting, in the ways that it can, to follow ritualistically appropriate behavior in the face of sudden death. She notes that because the coffin is set outside, a lantern, which is purposefully placed nearby, illuminates the casket all through the night. If the coffin had been set inside on a bench in the *velyka khata*, a candle would have illuminated that space during the night. Her mother keens. The funeral entourage follows the coffin the two miles, on its way to burial. But most telling, the family enacts a Ukrainian-Canadian funeral ritual with no priest present.[22] The dead had to be buried. The R family took it upon itself to act as priest and parishioner, to carry forward the funeral ritual that they knew. Instead of a turning aside of religious/ritual activity, the R family, at least the elders, embraced it, for surely it provided solace for their grief. For Nancy in her narrative, the resonance of Gus's funeral resides in the belief that she conquered her fear and "wasn't scared." She seems to be aware of the ritual aspects of Gus's funeral, but as technical notes, not quite at the level of the intent of the ritual (of its meaning).

Personal Narrative: Nancy (Rite of Passage: Death) #2

There are two other narratives about funerary ritual that hold meaning for Nancy. In one, she speaks (primarily) of the death of her grandmother, Elena, and in the other, the death of her mother, Maria.

> 11 May 1995, Tape #2, (#084-144)—Funeral of Grandmother (and Mother)
> NR: She [grandmother] was living there [with her son, Nick, and his family] when she died.
>
> *MJ: Tell me then, when you went to her funeral, did you look in the coffin, could you see her?*
>
> NR: Oh, yes, yes, yes.
>
> *MJ: And was she, indeed, arrayed in this white satin outfit that she made for herself?*[23]
>
> NR: She might have been…but her features were made up. And she had a shawl over her head…she probably prepared for the funeral. I'm sure she prepared. And she had those things…people used to prepare for those things.
>
> *MJ: Tell me about your Mother. When she died, did she prepare for her funeral?*
>
> NR: My Mother? Oh yes.
>
> *MJ: …She wore some kind of Ukrainian clothes?*
>
> NR: She [mother]…you know, for years, just like grandmother, she followed that tradition. She had acquired the Ukrainian cross-stitch shirt. You know, it was cross-stitch and all that. And she had pearls, not the pearls, the *korali* around her neck. And she had the traditional stuff, because she really prepared, she wanted to be buried in these particular things.

#####

Nancy has little to say about her grandmother's funeral.[24] Elena was dressed with a shawl about her head to indicate her elderly status, and indeed, wore what she had prepared for herself to wear in death. The singular point seems to be that make-up was applied to Elena's face. It would have been uncharacteristic for a woman of Elena's generation and background to appear in such a manner and Nancy seems to catch this anomaly. By the time of Elena's death, Ukrainian-Canadian funeral rituals had encountered Canadian medical and legal ordinances, such that funerals now took place in funeral homes. Thus, Elena's body was viewed, not in the *velyka khata* of a hypothetical *khata*, but in a funeral home in Edmonton. Nevertheless, her death wishes, which edged into Bukovynian funerary ritual practice, were granted. Thus, the white blouse, skirt and stockings that she had made for this occasion, she wore. And her head rested on a pillow, filled with dried herbs and wildflowers that she had collected for this purpose and that held, by the time of her death, secret meaning only to her.[25]

Without skipping a beat, Nancy notes that her mother, the outspoken and progressive Maria, has "followed that tradition," in other words, the funeral tradition of Elena. Thus, Maria, who has had a less than welcoming attitude towards Ukrainian-Canadian ritual observance, has turned back to it as the time of her death nears. She has prepared a death costume for herself that is comprised of traditional Ukrainian clothing—hand-woven white linen, hand-sewn into a women's long blouse and embellished with cross-stitching, a necklace of coral beads. Nancy objectively reports the facts in her narrative. Yet there is also a sense of Nancy's surprise, that her mother "really prepared" for her death, revealing this by insisting that "she wanted to be buried in these particular things."

Personal Narrative: Nancy (Rite of Passage: Death) #3

When Nancy turns to the actual funeral of her mother,[26] she communicates a sense of frustration and anger that two of her brothers have taken charge of arrangements, have misunderstood certain underlying imperatives connected to Ukrainian-Canadian funerary ritual, and, in her opinion, botched the enactment of Maria's final rite of passage.

26 May 1995, Tape #1, (#588-682)—Funeral of Mother
MJ: How was it when [your Mother] she died?

NR: Well, she died in Saskatchewan.

MJ: Oh, she died in Estevan [Saskatchewan]

> NR: Yes, in Estevan. She was brought here. Bill [elder brother] took charge of that. Bill…and I resented some of that…because he never consulted with me…I thought why go to all of that expense, because it had to be paid…I know that she had plans to be buried in her Ukrainian clothes that she was saving. They were actually, the fabric had been hand-woven. She was saving that for herself. But whether she discussed with anybody where she wanted to be buried, I don't know. She might have with Bill, but not with me. …
>
> Yes we did go, I went to the funeral. And Sam [elder brother] came out and …called everybody we could think of to come to the funeral. And that was against my [view] because it had nothing to do with the people [who knew her]. And he'd phone them that she'd died…It didn't make sense to me anyway.
>
> And then, after the funeral, the people that did come to the church service, expected, because that was the rule, that after the service they have, they have dinner or lunch…. And I spoke to Sam and Bill. They went over my head…[Sam and Bill could get Mother all the way from Saskatchewan to Alberta, but…] They would have nothing to do with giving those people a luncheon….But if they didn't invite…then they should have...because *that was a custom.* There was no announcement for a luncheon. That was a custom….

#####

Regarding her mother's funeral, Nancy feels, with some justification, that she herself has an innate sense of what is right and appropriate. Nancy, after all, is the one daughter and the one sibling out of eleven who has remained in the general geographical area of her mother's farm and of the old neighbors. And Nancy, like her mother in her own day, has remained a socially and politically active farm wife.

In her narrative, Nancy communicates her chagrin that her brothers, in her own words, "went over my head." Here the anti-authority theme resurfaces with men-in-authority versus women-who-have-no-authority strains. First one brother invites people to the funeral, who have little connection with Maria as a farm wife, that is, none of her former neighbors. And second and probably worse, both brothers neglect to provide a funerary feast after the service. For Nancy, this is a real breach of ritual rules: "that was a custom." Nancy emphasizes this point by uttering the phrase twice—"That was a custom!" And in this, she is correct.

Nancy simply profiles the R family's conflicted stance with regard to ritual observation and belief. There is gravitation from a rejection of ritual observance, to a defense of it. The question is how does a family continue to reaffirm its values and its interdependence without certain agreed-upon rituals that communicate family identity to them? In the case of the R family, Nancy infers that ritual observance is of minor import, if it holds meaning at all. But in times of stress or crisis, when the choice is between not marking the event or marking it in some way, the R family does chose the ritual gestures that they actively incorporated into the family system when the family was in its youth.

Personal Narrative: Nancy (Calendar Ritual: Christmas) #1

When the subject of Ukrainian calendar rituals arises, Nancy chooses to speak of Christmas, *Iordan* and Easter. These, she remembers as times of feast, a welcome pause in the routines of daily life.

> 26 May 1995, Tape #1, (#259-)—Christmas
> NR: ...We had special food at Easter and at Christmas.
>
> *MJ: Do you know how closely your Mother followed any of this?...The twelve meatless dishes...*
>
> NR: Well she tried to have the twelve dishes. I remember that she had...and we couldn't eat until the first star was in the heavens. The first star and then we'd eat, but not before. I remember that well. And for the food, what they had, well, of course, the bread was the main thing and the wheat [*kutia*] was another. And particular fruits...wild mushrooms, during the Summertime she'd pick wherever she could, so they'd be for Christmas...they used to cook the white beans. They were really good, because they'd mash them. They used to buy hemp oil and it was very flavorful. And mash garlic and mix that all up, and I still remember it was good. I enjoyed it. So that was one of the twelve dishes. And at the end there was prunes and dried apples. It was all dried fruit. That was for Christmas.
>
> *MJ: Did she use honey?*
>
> NR: She used honey for the wheat. It was part of a dish...with poppy seeds. That was all part of a dish...called *kutia*. And fish, that was another basic dish.

#####

As an excellent cook herself, it would seem that Nancy associates Christmas when she was a child, with a flavorful and varied menu. The ritual twelve meatless dishes and the waiting to eat until the first star of the evening had appeared, these are the singular parts of the calendar ritual for Nancy, that is, what comes to her mind first. In her description of the twelve meatless dishes, Nancy shows great care for matters of the feast table. She lightly notes the ritual emphasis on bread and *kutia*, and then outlines how foodstuffs are collected, preserved or prepared for the special meal and how truly delicious some of the dishes are. Thus, the R family collectively celebrated a religious and calendar event with some attention to what brought them pleasure—tasty food prepared with forethought. And the elders, John and Maria, must have impressed upon their children, some Ukrainian-Canadian ritual activity in marking the birth of Christ: the first star had to be spotted before the feast could begin.

Personal Narrative: Nancy (Calendar Ritual: Christmas) #2

> 25 February 2001, Telephone interview (notes)—Christmas
> For Christmas Eve, brother Bill would go and bring fresh hay into the house. He would say a blessing [*Khrystos…*] and scatter the hay under and on the table. The hay showed that Christ was born in a manger.

#####

Nancy is clearly aware of the reason for a ritual action. Her older brother brings fresh hay into the house on Christmas Eve, because "the hay showed that Christ was born in a manger." But more importantly, here she tells us that the R family, probably in its early days, did subscribe to various ritual steps that comprised the observance of a calendar ritual.

Personal Narrative: Nancy (Calendar Ritual: *Iordan*) #1

The R family, like other Ukrainian-Canadian families, at one time followed proscribed ritual steps to honor their ancestors and to show reverence to God and to the natural world. Nancy speaks to this fact when she reveals that the family observed *Iordan*, which marks the end of the Christmas-New Year's (*Malanka*) season. The baptism of Christ is honored on this day, called Epiphany. In the Orthodox, eastern, religious tradition, the day is called *Iordan* or *Vodokhreshcha* and is a day when all water is blessed. The R family would have taken a container carrying water to church to be blessed on this day and returned home to a special meal and to partake of some of the "holy" water, which, it was thought would promote health, prosperity and general well-being among its members.[27]

In speaking of *Iordan*, Nancy suggests that the R family did not "believe" in the properties of the blessed water. She uses her grandmother, who "thought that that water was really holy," as an antipode to the R family's skepticism. For Nancy, Elena is a rejected model in terms of her ritual observation and belief.

> 26 May 1995, Tape #1, (#322-)—*Iordan*
> *MJ: Any of the saints' days that you remember? Is there a Blessing of the Water?*
>
> NR: Oh, yes. That was in January 18th, but that was after Christmas. Yes. That was like the ending of the Christmas season. Like say, the Jewish people have a mass and then that was the last of the Christmas season. Yes, that's the Blessing of the Water.
>
> They'd take some water, and especially, my grandmother [Elena]. She believed in all of that; she thought that that water was really holy. You'd take it to church and they'd have it blessed. And she'd keep it in a bottle. And, you know, it could have been *dangerous* to drink! I don't know. But if some of the children got sick. And they'd call it "the blessed water," *Sviachennaia voda.* [Holy Water]
>
> "Put a few drops in the water because the child is sick. Give it to the child." I hear her say this...

#####

Not only did Elena believe in the efficacy of blessed water, but she also used it, in a manner that she considered beneficial to the R family. When, as a small child, grandson Bill is burned, Elena gives him a sip of the blessed water, according to Nancy. Elena acts on her belief and does not question it. Nancy interprets this action as one that could be dangerous: to drink unclean water would bring illness. Surely, Nancy is speaking out of the progressive inclinations of her own mother and out of her later, modern, self. However, in her narrative, Nancy captures a moment when her mother's mother was allowed to use sympathetic medicinal means, that is her belief in the curative properties of blessed water, on the R family children.

Personal Narrative: Nancy (Calendar Ritual: *Iordan*) #2

In a second narrative about the R family and *Iordan*, Nancy touches upon a number of familiar themes—her own interest in social justice, the R family's progressivism, and the striking difference between mother and grandmother in terms of ritual acceptance and rejection.

> 25 February 2001, Telephone interview (notes)—*Iordan*
> *Iordan*: Christ blessed the water on that day. My grandmother [Elena, familiarly called "Bunica"] always had water that was blessed. She'd save it from one year to another. When brother Bill was burned and in great pain, Bunica goes to her quarters and gives him a drink of that holy water.[28]
>
> Only my father or Father and Mother went to the *Iordan* service. We didn't have the clothes, the sleds and horses, there were not even blankets for the children to keep warm.[29] We'd be hungry and waiting for our parents to return from church.
>
> To us, Christmas and *Iordan* were part of the same thing [part of the same ritual season]. We children knew that it [*Iordan*] was the day when John the Baptist christianed Christ, saying prayers and so on. We knew that this day was special. We children would take a sip of the blessed water before our *Iordan* dinner.
>
> If someone in the family was sick, you'd give them a sip of that water. There were no plastic containers. Everything was limited. So, Bunica kept a whisky bottle with blessed water in it. She had a bouquet of herbs attached to the bottle.
>
> Bunica had great faith in the water's healing power. [When something would happen,] Bunica rushed to get the blessed water. But it was sparsely used in "our" home.[30] In our home, we had a little more knowledge, a little more intelligence than the other people. Some people were indoctrinated and didn't think for themselves. They believed in spirits. My mother didn't put as much faith in the blessed water. She wasn't religious. I never saw her pray.

#####

In her narrative, Nancy's attachment is not entirely focused on the dynamics of the ritual. Instead, she uses her recollection of *Iordan* as a means to articulate social concerns. The R children could not accompany their parents to the morning *Iordan* church service because "there were not even blankets for the children to keep warm." She paints a picture of four or five small children left alone in the *khata* and waiting for their parents to return from the *Iordan* service. To be sure, the *pich* gave off ample heat inside the *khata*. The early, pioneering days were a time of scarcity for the family and this had a direct impact on the children. The R family, like many others of similar circumstances, had little to spare. Nancy, ever sensitive to issues of social inequity in the larger sense, reveals her interest here in the small, touching detail, that is, the absence of blankets.

Nancy presents her grandmother as somewhat of a curiosity, for Elena always had water blessed on *Iordan*, she saved it from year to year, and she actually used it. And yet, she reveals that in the early days of the R family, her parents went together to the morning church service and returned home with blessed water, whereupon each child was given a sip of the liquid before their *Iordan* dinner. Although Nancy does not address the passage of time and its effect on the waning of *Iordan* ritual observance in the R family, it is undoubtedly a factor. And once the grandparents had moved away from the R family homestead, Elena, with her deep-seated beliefs, would no longer exert whatever influence she was able to exert.

Nancy intimates that her mother was simply, *a priori*, not religious. "I never saw her pray," Nancy says. And unlike her mother, Maria did not, according to Nancy, put much faith in the healing possibilities of blessed water, nor did she make occasion to use it. Elena, on the other hand, who did place faith in blessed water, is lumped by Nancy into the group of people who "believed in spirits." In truth, Elena did believe in spirits.[31] However, Nancy goes further in trying to explain the workings of the R family. That they have been able to avoid [religious] "indoctrination" and are therefore not superstitious (like Elena), she attributes to their ability to think for themselves, to their greater intelligence, to their greater knowledge. But this attitude of Nancy's would have the effect of setting the R family off and away from others in the community, who do not seek to avoid religious "indoctrination." And indeed, here, Nancy hints at insularity as a feature of R family identity. Stated another way, Nancy might say "we do it this way; they do it that way." It is not an inclusive stance.[32]

Personal Narrative: Nancy (Calendar Ritual: Easter)

Another familiar theme that Nancy presents in her narratives is that of community pressure to enact rituals. If the R family conceded to certain ritual observances, for example, to the rigors of obtaining blessed water on a deeply frozen January 19th for *Iordan*, it was a result of community pressure. Nancy has made this point clearly in her earlier narrative about christening ceremonies at St. Demitrius Ruthenian Greek Orthodox Church of Luzan.[33] In a narrative about Easter, Nancy attributes her mother's decorating *pysanky* to this pressure—"it was a tradition that you followed, because you had to have those eggs for blessing," she says.

> 26 May 1995, Tape #1, (#130-111, Side B)—Easter
> *MJ: Do you remember if your mother ever made pysanky?*
>
> NR: Oh very simple ones, yes. She used to…just, like…make a circle this way, that way, and put a cross in the center and she'd drop it into colored water, two or three different colors change, and all that. She did make some, because she had to have those to take to church to be blessed. That was the Easter eggs that you blessed. *Pysanka.*
>
> *MJ: And then did you eat those eggs or crush the shell into…?*
>
> NR: Oh, yes. Those eggs were eaten. Because especially, when you go to church and you get all the food blessed, and you put that to the center of the table…and a slice of bread and everything…partake of that…and there was some other whatever, but you start with that because it had been blessed.
>
> *MJ: But then the more ornate eggs she would maybe buy or trade?*
>
> NR: No, we didn't ever have ornate eggs, because I don't think she could spend the money on them. But it was a tradition that you followed, because you had to have those eggs for blessing, *pysanka.* And then there is the sausage, they used to bless the butter, they used to bless horseradish, cottage cheese, the eggs, the sausages and the bread….

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There were undoubtedly many reasons why Nancy's mother went to the trouble of making the colorful Ukrainian Easter eggs. One would hope that the simplest and most obvious reason for Maria's creating *pysanky* would be her joy in doing so. Continuing in this speculative line, perhaps she wanted to share something attractive with her children, to delight their senses, and to show them how an egg was "written." There would have been a connection for Maria to her youth in Chornivka, when she might have enjoyed family and community preparations for Easter. Decorating the eggs would also have been a way for Maria to mark the passage of deeply absorbed ritual seasonal cycles, from say, winter to spring, and renewal. She was, after all, Elena's daughter, and knew some of what her mother knew about an older way of counting time, but, as we have noted, chose not to adopt most of it.[34] Finally, Maria probably did feel that *pysanky* were essential if one were to be part of the community that celebrated Easter, that took their baskets of *paska*, sausage, butter, horseradish, cottage cheese, eggs, and so forth to be blessed by the priest.

From Nancy we see that the R family celebrated Easter. They carried their *paska* basket to church, participated in the religious service, visited with their neighbors, brought the blessed food home, feasted, and perhaps the youngsters rushed those two miles back to the church grounds for games and to ring the church bells. But did Easter bring the R family together? On this, Nancy is silent.

Concluding remarks on Nancy's personal narratives

Much like the narratives of her sister Katherine, Nancy's narratives are selective recollections, composed of what she seems to genuinely remember or perhaps what she has choosen to remember, and what she would like to highlight.

More than once in her narratives, Nancy seeks to make the point that the R family resisted the influence of the church; according to Nancy, the Rs were not "indoctrinated." But this is all very tricky, for what exactly does church or religious indoctrination involve in Nancy's mind? Ukrainian-Canadian rite of passage and calendar rituals were, in the late 19th century, when Nancy's mentors, the thirty-six year old Elena (grandmother) and the thirteen year old Maria (mother), arrived in Canada, a complicated melding of Christian elements and folk beliefs. For example, *Iordan*, named for the river Jordan, celebrates John the Baptist's baptizing Christ in the Jordan River, *Bohoiavlennia* or the Manifestation of God in the Holy Trinity, and the banishing of water devils and such from ponds, lakes, streams and rivers.[35] A Bukovynian village woman, such as Elena, would have incorporated and accepted all of the meaning that her local priest, and her village neighbors, attached to *Iordan*. She was "indoctrinated" by that priest, in the sense that he taught her why and how *Iordan* was observed as a calendar ritual. The same could be said of births, marriages, deaths, or of Christmas and Easter, among the many calendar feast days.

In a generalizing mode, Nancy seems to take all religious ritual as something akin to dis-information, something crippling that held people like her grandmother back. But Nancy is clear as well, that she is simply reflecting the philosophy of her mother, whom she sincerely respects. Taking her cues from Maria, Nancy affirms that the R family esteemed the acquisition of knowledge, and considered itself to be a family of some independent thinking. Nancy proposes that the family did not ascribe to the teachings of the church, which, for her, included an easy relationship with Old World superstition.

Thus, Nancy seems to say, with some insistence, that R family identity is linked to a rejection of religious ritual, of church teachings, in favor of secular learning and the steady acquisition of knowledge through school. It is as if she is reacting against a perceived label that the R family is "superstitious," which in a general sense, we know not to be the case. Stated succinctly, Nancy's family identification leads her to proselytize that the secular is good; the sacred is suspect.

But Nancy also implies that the R family projects a contradictory attitude towards (religious) ritual observance. The narratives that encapsulate Nancy's early memories show that her parents, and hence the family, marked calendar rituals, such as Christmas and *Iordan*, with some attention to their Ukrainian-Canadian heritage. Gus's funeral in 1918 was notably derived from Ukrainian-Canadian funerary rituals. And as late as 1926, for Nancy's wedding, the R family tried to enact a semi-traditional Ukrainian-Canadian rite of passage ritual. It was what the family knew; it was what they returned to; it was what gave them a sense of their identity. To celebrate Christmas, *Iordan*, Easter, a wedding, a funeral using the Ukrainian-Canadian rituals they had absorbed and incorporated from other family members, from their neighbors and from the church, the R family consciously and unconsciously reaffirmed its collective identity. But Nancy projects a denial at the heart of their activity by maintaining that the family was not given to ritual practice or belief (which she equates with religion, with church, and with being religious). Her narratives belie her assertion.

With insight, Nancy tries to show that her mother struggled to address larger issues in the community, that is, Maria could rise above petty rivalries and accept a role as area delegate for the school system in order to make things better for all the children, not just her own. Nancy perceives that she has followed her mother's example and does indeed set forth that focusing on the broader issues, such as social justice, social equity, and the questioning of authority when relevant, are part of the family's identity. Nancy herself has a respected history as a social crusader and consistently questions authority in all of its forms as a point of pride (and family identity).

Nancy grew up surrounded by people—she was one among eleven siblings— and yet, there is little sense of this. If, because of irregular school attendance, she did not interact with other school children, surely she would have seen community activity through church—there would have been christenings and a once-a-year *khram*—and later there was the community hall with programs, plays and dances. Christmas and Easter were family *and* community celebrations. For some years, Nancy's maternal grandparents lived with the R family and would have provided social enrichment to their grandchildren. However, Nancy's narratives suggest that she was alone. Although her brothers and sisters enter and leave her various scenes, Nancy seems not to interact with them. Only in the case of her mother's funeral does Nancy assume an involved role with her two elder brothers, and in this, she reacts against their perceived authority.

There is no doubt that the R family was part of the Soda Lake community. They were instrumental in getting the church, the school and the community hall organized and built. But we derive little sense of the family's connecting with the community from Nancy's narratives. Instead, their insularity is what we discern. That is, Nancy intimates that the R family, though an involved family, is not particularly inclusive of the community in which they live.

For all the commotion and mischief that eleven siblings must have made, Nancy's narratives do not reflect much rollicking noise, they are quiet pieces. With all the work of establishing a family farm out of primitive wilderness, the R family, like immigrant families of similar circumstances, had little time for leisure; and yet, there were immigrant families that availed themselves of pleasurable social intercourse at *khrams* and on various other calendar feast days. If the R family participated in joyful events joyfully, we do not learn this from Nancy.

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[1] "Although Father kept us home from school when he had a special need for our help, he picked on my oldest brother, Sam, and my oldest sister, Nancy, for help to the extent that they were able to complete only the first four or five grades. Father did not believe in education for girls and, although mother fought him, he had his way with Nancy; but mother won with respect to the five younger girls, all of whom completed high school and received additional professional training qualifying them for teaching, nursing or secretarial work" (Alex R, 2002: 51).

Nancy's younger sister Vera also speaks of Nancy's being held back from school.
Vera: "Father had Al and Sam and Bill. And he wanted Al to go to school, that was a mark of prestige. Nancy was the third hired man. Well, they weren't hired because he didn't pay them; they worked the farm, like slaves. I should call them 'slaves' more than hired help. And she had to quit school before she was in 8th Grade. She missed a lot of school, because if you had to plow you forgot about school and they weren't strict about your being in school...then, like they are now. At a certain age [now], you have to be in school every day. So Nancy had to plow. She had to work the fields. And she essentially never finished 8th Grade. Nancy worked so hard."
Interview with Vera R, 25 March 1995, Berkeley, CA, p. 13.

[2] In an interview, Nancy speaks of her decision to go into politics.
Nancy: I just had a mind that I could judge. I could value things. At one farm meeting, I said to the farmers, "why don't we organize and have a strike on raising chicks for one year so that the hatcheries would get behind us and we'd get a set price on the price of eggs?" And one woman got up and said, "It's O.K. for you! You have more than one quarter of land, but we have only one quarter of land, so we have to sell the eggs." It was so self-centered. I wasn't talking about myself. I was talking about the situation.

I kept persevering. And then, because I had nurses' training, I was asked to attend different meetings of farm groups and explain to them how to self-examine for breast cancer. And I used to do that. A lot of things [I did], there are no records of. I saw the injustices and I thought, "There's no other way but through politics, because that's where all the decisions are made—in politics."
Interview with Nancy, 5 May 1995, Edmonton, AB.

[3] "Not Just a Woman, But a CCFer at That," *Edmonton Journal*, Saturday, August 23, 1980.

[4] Nancy, in another interview, tries to explain, in part, her mother's anti-clerical position.
Nancy: Mother used to say, "we left Europe because of the military and because of the church." The women were always looked down upon. The women did the work; the men went to the *korchma* [the village pub] and drank beer.

She said about the church, "Look, the priest does nothing all week and the people cannot read and write. My mother [Elena] doesn't know money [what it is/the values of various

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coins and bills] except by the look of it! They should have had courses for seniors." My mother used to talk like that and this was seventy or eighty years ago. She was thinking of those things, she was way ahead [of her time]. But many people would say, "Oh, it's God given."
Interview with Nancy, 2 May 1995, Edmonton, AB.

[5] Nancy suggests that she equates religion and church to each other, and links these two to ritual observance. For Nancy, the critical stance she assumes toward the church (religion) and the clergy extends to "superstitious" action and belief, which are encouraged by the church and the clergy.

[6] According to historian Orest T. Martynowych, "Although most [Ukrainian-Canadian] *inteligenty* lacked higher education, specialized skills or professional status, they were an intelligentsia in the historically specific sense of the word. Exposure to new ideas made them aware of the clash between modern and traditional societies and alienated them from many peasant values. As a critically thinking elite, they formed discussion groups and challenged tradition in the name of reason and progress. Determined to improve the lot of the immigrant masses, they spread their ideas by organizing mass meetings, publishing newspapers and establishing countless educational-cultural societies" (Martynowych, 1991: 172).

For example, in 1918 when Maria and John R sent their eldest son to Vegreville, to complete the eighth grade, Alex R lived in the Taras Shevchenko Institute or Bursa, founded (in 1917) by (intellectual) leaders in the Ukrainian-Canadian community, Peter Svarich key among these. Alex R notes that " the Bursa was organized to accommodate pupils who were unable to complete their elementary or high school education in their own communities. The Bursa also provided guidance and supervision for the pupils, nurtured their cultural heritage and instructed them in the Ukrainian language and history....Unfortunately, the public schools closed their doors to out-of-town pupils after two years for lack of space and the Bursa was forced to end its short existence. Happily, I completed my eighth grade before that happened" (Alex R., 2002: 57).

Martynowych continues. "Unlike the Protestants and French Catholics, the Ukrainian intelligentsia had no clear vision of Canada and its destiny; they saw only the potential of 'reborn' Ukrainian peasant immigrants transformed into 'new people' in the new world, and they felt and obligation to 'enlighten and elevate' them (*prosvityty i pidnesty*). Familiar with peasant life in Galicia and Bukovyna, as well as in Canada, they feared that peasant conservatism, fatalism, suspicion, illiteracy, superstition and intemperance might doom the immigrants to perpetual dependence and social subservience in the new world. They were much alarmed by the growing prejudice in Canada toward Ukrainians and wanted to raise their prestige" (1991: 172).

[7] By 1912, Maria, Nancy's mother, was running the rural Soda Lake post office, performing the duties of local registrar of births, marriages and deaths. She became a school board activist, ultimately a trustee, and was among the founding members—along

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with her husband— of the community's church and its community hall. According to the autobiography of her eldest, Maria identified strongly with the spirit of Ukrainian nationalism. "She subscribed to the Canadian weekly, "Ukrainian Voice," collected a few Ukrainian books, and read aloud to us occasionally poems of Taras Shevchenko, whom she regarded as the greatest poet, author and patriot of her people" (Alex R, 2002: 22).

Nancy speaks of her mother's becoming a school board trustee.
Nancy: When she [Mother] became a trustee—I'll tell you how it happened. There was a school meeting. And there were these trustees discussing...and something that they said, she responded, "I don't agree with that! This is the way it should be." And one of the trustees replied, "If you are so smart, why don't you go to the convention and bring it up?" She said, "Sure I will, if you nominate me." They nominated her.
Interview with Nancy, 5 May 1995, Edmonton, AB

[8] It was a political battle coming from upheavals in Europe from which Ukrainian nationalism was arising. The Pruth community divided into two camps. One camp wanted to continue with an old-guard [pro-Russian priest] and the other camp militated for a new-guard [pro-Ukrainian priest]. The new-guard group decided to leave the pioneer church, St. Demitrius Ruthenian Greek Orthodox Church of Luzan, and build its own church, which came to be named the Pruth Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church.

According to *The History of Willingdon: 1928-1978*, on February 13th, 1931, forty-two men and women gathered at a meeting in Pruth Hall to organize a congregation to build Pruth Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church. The site chosen for the church was the northwest corner of the quarter-section, NW 11-55-15-4, and for the cemetery at the northeast corner. In 1932 the building was started and in July of 1933 the completed church was blessed, Bishop Teodorovich officiating. More than 400 people attended the two-day celebration of the church's consecration. (Charuk 1978: 99)

[9] Nancy's elder brother Alex speaks to this point in his autobiography. He states that "She [Mother] shared the historical prejudices of the Ukrainian people. Among the objects of her dislikes were Russians (Moscovites), Poles, Jews and Catholics....[she] told of the immorality of Catholic priests...." (Alex R, 2002: 25).

[10] In another interview, Nancy alludes to the social and cultural pressures driving rite of passage rituals.
Nancy: It was urgent for the community to have some kind of place together. If a baby was born, it had to be christianed and if someone died you had to have a priest. It was something unheard of if you didn't have a priest bury [the dead]. There was an urgency to have a church.
Interview with Nancy, 2 May 1995, Edmonton, AB

[11] Background information regarding birth rituals, such as the christening of an infant, can be found in the dissertation chapter on Katherine, endnote #2.

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[12] After we had finished the taped interview and were chatting, I asked Nancy why her mother had not been the person to be *kuma* (godmother) to the L family's child. Nancy answered that she had been sent to the christening because her mother was in the midst of her menstrual cycle. Thus, Nancy inferred that she was aware of the connection between woman/bleeding and woman/unclean that the church endorsed in its ritual proscriptions. Possibly Nancy was aware that Ukrainian (Bukovynian) folk belief also connected a woman's menses with a state of being unclean. Whereas Nancy's sister, Katherine, attributes her mother's segregation from church parishioners—at the time of an R family christening—to woman/having had a baby and woman/ sinning by virtue of getting pregnant. Katherine seems not to remember, to have understood, or to be inclined to bring up the belief that a woman's bleeding rendered her "unclean" by the lights of the church.

[13] Nancy repeatedly uses the term "christianing" or "christianed" to mean christening or christened.

[14] Nancy's wedding took place on July 14th, 1926. Nancy had just turned nineteen on July 3rd. Background information regarding a Bukovynian-Canadian wedding can be found in the dissertation chapter on Katherine, endnote #9.

[15] This would have been the house built in 1912, the first wood-frame, Anglo-Canadian house. The second wood-frame house was under construction in 1926 and probably was yet unfinished or not finished enough to host a wedding in.

[16] The wood-frame house built in 1912 had a floor plan that was modeled, in part, after the original, traditional *khata*. That is to say that the main floor consisted of two rooms at the front of the house, one of which faced south east and was used for hosting guests, as the *velyka khata* was in the *khata*, the other room faced south west. The R sisters referred to the room on the south east corner as "the parlor." Thus, what was the *velyka khata* in the original *khata*, was now called the parlor in the 1912 Anglo-Canadian house.

We have already noted that the R family when they built their first (semi-permanent) home in Canada, the *khata*, built it according to traditional and ritual guidelines, with the front door facing south, the *mala khata* (little room) on the west and the *velyka khata* (great room) on the east side with a storage space (*siny*) between the two rooms. The family's daily activity took place in the *mala khata* and around the *pich* which was built into this room and used for cooking, for heat and as a sleeping platform for the younger children. All this is to say that the Rs brought their Old World architectural knowledge and spiritual belief with them to the New World. The *velyka khata* (great room), which faced east and south, was the room in which the icons were hung. This room was reserved for special events, for guests, and for the presentation of the dead before burial. It was a room one entered in a reverent manner.

[17] Nancy's father does own a car, but at the time of her wedding the vehicle was not working. It was up on blocks in a shed where it remained for several years.

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[18] In speaking further of other aspects of her wedding, Nancy says, "So…And one thing, you know, like John, he made me a lot of promises, but…anyway, one promise he did keep, he said he'd take me on a honeymoon, which he did, to the coast. We went to Vancouver, which was unheard of then."
Interview with Nancy, May 11 1995, Tape #1.

[19] Nancy does not tell us whether her wedding took place all in one day or over a series of days. It is quite possible that the greeting of the bride by the groom's family and subsequent wedding dinner at his parents' home may have taken place the day after the church wedding.

[20] Background information regarding a Bukovynian-Canadian funeral can be found in the dissertation chapter on Katherine, endnote #19, page 123.

[21] It is interesting to note that Nancy remembers a lantern outside, lighting the coffin during the night; whereas, Katherine remembers a lighted candle inside the house, set in the kitchen window.

[22] During the flu pandemic in east central Alberta, so many people were dying, and with such suddenness, that priests to officiate at funerals were in short supply.

[23] In an interview with Elena's daughter-in-law, Julia S, Julia and her daughter, Alberta, talk about Elena's preparation for her own death, the clothes that she had made for the final moment, a small pillow for her head that she'd collected wildflowers and herbs for.
Alberta: I remember going to the funeral home for the viewing. Mom showed us all her clothes that she had on, her shoes....
Julia: She had them made for herself...for years….It was a white skirt and a white blouse, satin-like. In fact I think [you can see the ensemble] it is in one of those pictures. White skirt, gathered, like satin, quite long. White socks [stockings]. Black patent slippers. She had white ribbons...you were supposed to pull them because there weren't panty hose at that time [Julia laughs]...and you tied them below the knee, so the socks don't fall off. And she had a pillow made out of the different flowers that she picked up, and herbs. And that was her pillow.
Interviewer: Do you have any idea what the herbs and flowers were?
Julia: Oh...everything she picked up...along...Wildflowers. Wild stuff.
Interviewer: Was it a small pillow? Big pillow?
Julia: 12" X 10"
Interviewer: She had all these things made and put together for years!?
Julia. Yes. And she had them for a long time, because she was very sick. In about 1924-25, there was a flu epidemic [and she got sick]. So she was ready [to die].
Interview with Julia S, 2 May 1995, Edmonton, AB, pg. 17 of transcript.

[24] Elena died November 28th, 1947. She had been living for some years in a tiny cabin behind the home of her only surviving son, Nick S., his wife, Julia and their four daughters. At the time of death, Elena was 86 years old.

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[25] Elena's granddaughter Alberta, who was privy to the preparations for Elena's funeral and also present at the funeral kindly shared this information with me.

[26] Maria died on September 24th, 1970. She was 86 years old at the time of her death.

[27] Nancy's older brother Bill, speaks of the R family's observance of *Iordan* in his unpublished autobiography.
"In the early days, there were few Orthodox churches and ministers. The ministers were from Russia and were under the Moscow See. I remember not only the year, but the day—January 19th, St. Jordan Day, the day the water in the river Jordan was blessed. This [is] in accordance with the Julian calendar. That year the service was at the church in Wostok. The service starts in the evening and water is blessed in the early morning.

Father left by sleigh in the early evening. It was cold. During the night, it got bitterly cold. Wostok was about twenty miles from the farm, so the trip was a long one. We, of course, could have no food or water on Jordan Day, till we had a drink or sip of holy water. Father arrived home and then we all sat down to breakfast. First, the holy water was passed to each one. Father then said he would never again drive so far in such cold weather. If there was no service closer or more convenient, we would just have to live without the holy water" (Bill R. 1989: 3).

[28] As a child, Bill fell onto the metal heat surface of the *pich* and his arm was burned. His elder brother Sam writes of this incident in his unpublished autobiography.
"One nice thing about the Dutch oven [*pich*] and bread baking, it gave us a good warm place to sleep on. It was built in the corner against both the side wall and the end wall and had a thick top of clay. Once it warmed up, which took a long time, it stayed warm a long time and that was our bed. It could accommodate all three of us older boys [Alex, Sam and Bill]. At one time, while tussling on top of that "peach," Bill fell off and the back of his hand hit the top of the stove alongside which happened to be very hot. He burned it very badly and still has the scar to show for it" (Sam R, 1982: 2).

Bill R himself recalls the mishap in his unpublished manuscript.
"Right next to this *pich* was a stove made of clay. A hot fire was put in it for a couple of days and this clay turned to brick. Of course the clay was kneaded to make a stove. On top was a steel plate, a hollow for wood was left under the steel plate. This was the cook stove.

One Winter day, we boys were on the *pich* to keep warm. We did not have warm clothes to be able to play outside in the snow and cold. Mother and father must have been away for quite some time. Mother came in the door and we all rushed to meet her. I guess, somehow in the mad scramble, I was pushed and fell. My left hand landed on top of the hot kitchen stove. I have the scar for life. I remember mother using some kin d of a salve and wrapping my hand. I was crying in pain. Father came in from somewhere with icicles

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hanging from his moustache and face…Today, I do not remember the pain or how long it took to heal" (Bill R., 1989: 3).

[29] The sense here is that it would have been dangerous in the early days to take young children to an early morning *Iordan* service. The cold was bitter, the distances were long and proper insulating wraps were beyond the means of the R family.

[30] Here, Nancy is making a distinction between the way her grandmother used the blessed water and the way her mother, Maria, used the water.

[31] We have already seen, in one of Katherine's narratives, that (in Katherine's presence) when a door blows open in Elena's home, or when the structure creaks, Elena attributes this to the spirits of her two dead sons, Gus and Bill.

[32] In another interview, Nancy speaks of her parents as leaders in the community.
Nancy: But, to come back to mother...they were well-respected in the community. They were leaders, because my father was the kind of a man who liked good farming practices. He started with the government to have registered cattle, a good strain of cattle, and later on, he cooperated with the district agriculturist to farm well. He was more informed and interested in the quality of things, and so was she.
Interview with Nancy, 2 May 1995, Edmonton, AB.

[33] See the 5 May 1995 interview regarding christenings, on page 123 of this dissertation.

[34] The childhood memories of both Nancy and Katherine give various instances of their mother's religious-ritual skepticism. By 1918—Nancy was ten, Katherine was eight—when Maria and John sent their eldest child away from home to complete his school education, Maria was directed to the future and its possibilities.

[35] Voropai notes that despite the Christian underpinnings of *Iordan*, some folk beliefs and superstitions were associated with it. (Voropai 1958: 197)

Vera, My Mother

Vera is the fourth of the R sisters and my mother. By the time I first formally interviewed her, I had already interviewed her elder sister, Katherine, on four separate occasions. Katherine lived near-by. My mother did not. So in March of 1995, when she came to visit me, I asked her whether we might talk about her early memories and I might tape record what she had to say. Mother was amused and a bit nervous, that a tape recorder would be capturing what she said. For her, it did not seem important enough to have a taped record of our discussion. She also worried that her "version" of family "history" would not be "correct," since she was among the younger group of R siblings;[1] and sisters Katherine and Nancy, as elders, probably remembered things more as they were. She knew that I had been interviewing Katherine and was somewhat sensitive about this as well.

She and I discussed the fact that there was really no "correct" or definitive version of the R family heritage and that Vera's narratives would carry as much weight as Katherine's or Nancy's. Indeed, Vera could communicate the transition that the R family was undoubtedly in the process of, for as a middle child, Vera had a sense of what had gone before and how it was changing. She agreed to talk with the tape recorder recording. As in the conversations with Katherine, I began by asking Vera to speak about her early memories, I also had more focus now. Katherine had spoken of rites of passage and calendar rituals, and thus, with some notes in hand, I hoped to ask Vera to address ritual observance in the R family.

A Note About Vera

In a sense, my mother never left Soda Lake. Her memories about the place were fresh. She viewed her life at Soda Lake with distinct realism; it held little romance for her. My sense of Vera while she was growing up in Soda Lake is that she was a bright, observant child who was quiet, intense, worked hard at her studies and thus did very well in school.[2] After a year of teacher training in normal school and a sojourn teaching at several one-room schoolhouses in central Alberta, she married my father, a fellow Ukrainian-

Canadian of Galician origins. Their search for economic well-being led them to emigrate to the United States in 1947. They settled near one of my mother's elder brothers, Sam, in Fort Wayne, Indiana. My mother, father and Sam were a minority of three. There may have been other Ukrainian-Canadians or Ukrainian-Americans living in Ft. Wayne, Indiana in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, but my parents and uncle were not aware of them. Removed from the cultural background from which they came, they ceased to hear or speak Ukrainian. They adopted the calendar rituals of their host country, as they were in the process of doing in Alberta, and retained only certain Ukrainian-Canadian culinary dishes—*pyrohy*, *holubtsi* and *nachynka*— at holiday time as a pentimento of their heritage. My mother prepared these dishes, much to the delight of my father and uncle. My mother was not a natural story-teller, but when asked, she could speak, somewhat reluctantly and, strikingly about her youth.

Vera's memories of Soda Lake are, in general, not fond memories, so it is to her credit that she simply tries to narrate what life was like as she grew up. She does not embellish or attempt to make nice. And though, at times, her narratives have a dark cast to them, they seem to ring true. Furthermore, Vera tends to scramble the time sense in her narratives. For example, she will talk of the far past and suddenly switch to the present or to the more recent past in the course of one sentence. It would seem that because Soda Lake continues to be vividly alive in Vera's mind, the far past is still quite near. Perhaps this thinking of the past-in-the-present leads Vera to commingle past-present in her narratives.

Vera implies that there were unspoken ritual rules: in other words, this or that is the way something was supposed to be done. Like her sister Nancy, Vera insists that the R family was not "superstitious." Although she gives instances of Old World belief in the R family, Vera never wavers from her position that the family did not ascribe to Old World rituals. And, in this regard, she notes that the R family was unlike its Ukrainian-Canadian neighbors, who presumably did ascribe to Old World ritual and belief.

Personal Narrative: Vera (Rite of Passage: Birth) #1

The following narrative speaks, in part, to special circumstances for a christening. The birth ritual held for Vera's youngest sister, Margaret, is being performed in the R home because the new church has not yet been built and because the R family refuses to attend the "old" pioneer church.[3] Thus, the Rs have put themselves outside of at least part of the community in which they live. In Vera's narrative about the baby's christening, "then" equals "now." For her, the priests' sprinkling water and saying "a lot of mumbo jumbo," is what they did then and what they do today. For her, not much has changed. Whether she believed this at the time, when she was five years old, is another matter.

> 25 March 1995, pg. 30—Family Christening
> *MJ: What would happen at christenings? Do you remember any of the ceremony?*
>
> VR: No, but I remember Margaret being christened. So how old would I have been then? Three? Maybe that's the first thing I remember.[4]
>
> *MJ: You were almost five.*
>
> VR: So I was older. Five. I remember they did it at home, because we didn't have the new church yet. And we wouldn't go to the old church [St. Demitrius Ruthenian Greek Orthodox Church of Luzan]. The priest came to the house—I don't know if he had several parishes and he traveled around....And, of course, we had invited a bunch of people. Whoever the godparents, godfather, godmother were...and I just remember Mother handing Margaret to the priest and saying "Maria Margareta," her name. And they do the same thing [now]—sprinkle water and say a lot of mumbo jumbo. [She laughs.]

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Nevertheless, it must have been a memorable sight for the child to see a priest in her home and to watch her mother ceremonially hand over infant "Maria Margareta" to the priest. At the time, the young Vera knows that a christening is taking place. In her narrative, she recalls no specific ritual details, while noting that there was a priest, guests, a naming ceremony and ritual water. Indeed, she reduces the ritual gestures that are transpiring to "mumbo jumbo."

In the telling of the event, Vera does not seem to be a part of what is taking place. She appears unaware of brothers, sisters or her father who in all likelihood were present and the godparents seem to be strangers to her, "whoever" they were. There is an awareness that when you have a rite of passage celebration, you must "of course" do things in a certain way, according to certain unspoken rules: Vera says, "of course we had invited a bunch of people." For her, this act is evidently required. She is lightly pejorative in her usage—"a bunch of people," like a bunch of grapes. From the information in her narrative, Vera insinuates that she was a child alone in a room full of strangers. From the vantage point of seventy-four years, Vera describes her detachment from the ritual activity that surrounded her so long ago.

Her distancing can also be observed in the verb tenses—the time sense—that Vera employs in her narrative. For example, she concludes, "...and I just remember Mother handing Margaret to the priest and saying "Maria Margareta," her name. And they do the same thing [now]—sprinkle water and say a lot of mumbo jumbo." She moves from the simple past tense—"I remember"— to the pluperfect subjunctive (the past in a continuing present tense)—"they do the same thing." As the narrator, Vera disengages herself from her topic and at the same time retains its personal quality. She moves from direct memory to the present. It is a subtle process of thought that takes place here.

Vera's term for the priest's benediction is startling. "Mumbo jumbo," she calls his ritual christening incantation. That she would label this ritual action as "mumbo jumbo," that is, "a complicated and sometimes purposeless activity intended to obscure and confuse,"[5] speaks to the depth of her rejection of religious and ritual observance and belief. It would seem that Vera has been affected by her mother's attitude and opinions regarding priests and religious ceremony.

Personal Narrative: Vera (Rite of Passage: Birth) #2

> 25 March 1995, pg. 31—Christening
> *MJ: Were all of you baptized?*
>
> VR: Oh, I'm sure we were.
>
> *MJ: Do you remember the names of any of the priests?*
>
> VR: No.
>
> *MJ: Were they all itinerant?*
>
> VR: I think in our case they [the priests] were, because that new church across from the [community] hall wasn't built 'til we were all... not little children any more. They baptized or christened children when they were babies because of the high mortality rate. That was very important! If you weren't baptized, the priest wouldn't give you a burial.

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In her second narrative about christenings, Vera relates what she considers to be the reason behind the baptism of Ukrainian-Canadian children as infants. It is typical and interesting that her theoretical justification is a practical one, not a spiritual one: the high infant mortality rate, and the potential absence of a decent burial. Vera has learned from her elders that christening is of the utmost importance—no christening; no burial. She conveys a sense that it would be taboo, not to be buried by a priest. This could be a nod to her having somewhere accepted ritual belief regarding the christening of a child, for she seems to agree that burial with a priest in attendance is essential. However, Vera could also be making a pointed and cynical remark about priests, that is, that a priest would act according to black and white rules—no christening; no burial, period.

Personal Narrative: Vera (Rite of Passage: Birth) #3

> 17 January 2003, tape index #074—Quick Baptism
> I remember her [my mother] talking about, I don't know…it was around the time of the Dionne quintuplets.[6] And she said that one time, in the village [Chornivka], some woman had quartuplets. They got the priest. He baptized them, because that was very important. Then they died.

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In yet a third brief narrative about christening, Vera underscores a point that she has made earlier, in her 1995 narrative, the profound importance of baptizing an infant. This narrative has a haunting quality for it omits the emotional and subjective side of the deaths of the quartuplets. Perhaps Vera's narrative is a pass-through, that is, she relates a story just as she heard it from her mother or perhaps this is simply the way she envisions the scene. It is a dark view. Her reductive narrative is a bloodless series of steps: four babies born, priest fetched, baptism, death. Vera uses the narrative as an example to show that the priest was the ticket. He facilitated the ritual and the ritual was what you did, regardless of what it meant. The ritual made things right with the universe.

Personal Narrative: Vera (Rite of Passage: Death) #1

25 March 1995, pg. 17—Preparations for Death
VR: Mother was not a superstitious person. That's something I don't understand. They came from the village with all those other people. And yet...

MJ: There were things that she did that were superstitious..

VR: By my time, they had been exposed enough to the English and the English made fun of that and so they dropped [those village superstitions]. But [brother] Al says he remembers...

I don't know which doctor I went to and he looked into my ears and said, "well, it looks like you were pretty sick when you were little." There were scars.

And [brother] Al says he remembers when I was about 3 years old, I had diphtheria or scarlet fever. He remembers that mother had lit candles, because I guess, I was supposed to depart, but I guess I didn't.

MJ: That wasn't it. That wasn't why she lit the candles.

VR: Why? I don't know. He said she lit the candles.

MJ: There could be a number of reasons. Candles were for the spirit to find the way. There was this belief that there were three days when the spirit stayed in the house and then after that, it made its peace and went on to the next thing. But in order to be in the house, to stay there, to have this comfort of family, you had to light the candles, because then the spirit could see....Actually, its really very touching. Maybe she didn't light the candles just because she thought you were going to die, but because she...

> VR: Maybe it meant that my spirit would go to Heaven instead of Hell.
>
> *MJ: Well maybe she was afraid it was floating around the room somewhere and she wanted to keep it there!*
>
> VR: Well, yes. I guess I was on the verge of death. There was no penicillin. No. Nothing. So how do you overcome scarlet fever or diphtheria? A lot of children died.

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This is a somewhat unique narrative in which Vera speaks of her own expected death. An early childhood illness has set her mother to lighting candles for the child.[7] This, Vera interprets as her mother's having given up on her and consigned her to death. There is a bit of the theme of the unloved child in her narrative. Vera begins with a surprising statement: "Mother was not a superstitious person." The statement is surprising because the rest of her narrative essentially contradicts the introductory statement and Vera seems not to be aware of this irony.

What does Vera mean when she uses the word "superstitious?" I would argue that, like Nancy, Vera connects the term to Old World religious and ritual activity and belief. Indeed, like Nancy, Vera equates ritual activity with religious activity. The two are the same thing in her mind. One went to church for *Iordan* to have water blessed and then brought the water home to use for healing. For Vera, both the going to church and the use of Holy Water are in effect "superstitious" activity, that is, "an act or practice resulting from ignorance, unreasoning fear of the unknown, or mysterious trust in magic or chance or a false conception of causation."[8] That Vera makes a point of noting that being "superstitious" is not an R family trait is significant, and she herself wonders that this could be so. How is it that the R family, personified by its matriarch, could be so unlike its cohorts, all of whom derived from similar, if not the same, village culture?

Vera's narrative is complex.[9] She begins with a question in her mind. How could it have been that her mother, who was the product of Bukovynian (Ukrainian) village culture, a culture that, Vera assumes, was saturated by rituals and by ritual belief, how was it that Maria came away from it all as non-superstitious, or in other words, as a person who did not order her life according to ritual and ritual belief? When Vera looked around at the Bukovynian neighbors in the Soda Lake area, she must have seen ex-villagers who continued in their rituals and ritual belief. For Vera, her mother was not among this group. Of course, placing her mother and her family outside of this group set them apart and elevated them in Vera's mind.

When I remind Vera that there were things that her mother did that pointed to her honoring certain rituals ("superstitions"), Vera counters that by the time she was a youth, her parents had left their "superstitions" behind because of pressure from their English neighbors, Anglo-Canadians of English extraction. The implication is that the Rs were sensitive to the English who "made fun" of their adherence to old ways. Because there was pressure to drop the old ways, gradually they did.

Vera suddenly jumps from the nearer past to the remote past. Her eldest brother, twelve years her senior, remembers a time when Vera, as a small child, was desperately ill. Vera jumps again to the nearer past when she is an adult, a doctor has confirmed that she'd been very ill as a toddler. There are the scars to prove it. According to her brother, Vera was so ill, that her mother lit candles, believing, no doubt, that death was immanent.

Vera uses her mother's purported candle lighting as an example of a time before pressure from Anglo-Canadian neighbors caused her parents to "drop" their superstitions.[10] But her example works in two different directions. It more-or-less demonstrates that her parents let go of their earlier old ways. It is also contradictory, because it reveals that her mother had used ritual acts at appropriate moments, that her mother was, for some time, "superstitious," that she came to Canada with a ritual belief system largely intact and relied on it—off and on— for some years, at least through Nancy's wedding in 1926, which was consciously, in part, a Ukrainian-Canadian wedding.

Additionally, Vera uses the candle-lighting incident as a moment for grief. "Mother had lit candles, because I guess I was supposed to depart, but I guess I didn't," she says. The tone of her voice when she utters this sentence wavers. It is full of emotion. This, in part, is why I interrupt her to try to ameliorate her pain. For Vera, her mother's lighting the candles is an invitation for the child to die. What she does not see is Maria's desperation and her doubtless frantic, reaching for anything, efforts to keep small Vera from passing on.

Vera knows that candle lighting is a part of Ukrainian-Canadian funerary ritual. For her, candles are associated with death—we will see this in Vera's next narrative about the death of her uncle. But beyond this she does not venture. She does not know why her mother would have lit candles save that she expects her child to die. She speculates that the candle lighting might help her soul go to Heaven, as opposed to Hell. This is getting closer to the heart of ritual meaning, but she quickly turns the direction of the narrative back to issues of body, rather than soul, and to the issue of finality—there was no medicine, there was nothing, children died.

Personal Narrative: Vera (Rite of Passage: Death) #2

At the time of her Uncle Gus's death, Vera was two years old. When her Uncle Bill died, she was three. It makes some sense therefore, that she remembers only "commotion" and "crying." It is extraordinary and speaks to remarkable events, that Vera recalls even these sensations. We can presume that she remembers portions of her Uncle Bill's funeral since she comments that a coffin was in the parlor. There was no reason for Bill's body to be shown anywhere but in the family "parlor," whereas for Gus, Spanish influenza prevented his body's being brought into the house. Katherine has explained this quite clearly already.

> 25 March 1995, pg. 31—Death of uncles
> *MJ: Were you old enough to remember the deaths of Gus and Bill?*
>
> VR: What I remember is a lot of commotion and crying. And I think that their coffins were in the parlor, which we never lived in. In the summer, it was kind of a nice room to be in: it was cool. You'd shut it off and put things in there that were a little nicer...I think that that's where mother kept those *kylyms* hung...
>
> And I think that [Gus and Bill] were in there. And the candles, when I was little and I'd go in that room, I could always smell the candles. Sometimes mother kept

> the milk or the butter in that room and she'd send me in—the door would be shut. I was always afraid to go in. And boy, I'd run out of there. I was so afraid! I guess I thought about ghosts. I don't know where I got that.
>
> *MJ: Somebody told you.*
>
> VR: I can remember later, this would be when mother was feeling kind of down, she would take their [Gus and Bill's] pictures down and she'd wail. Oh God! It didn't leave you feeling good. As little as I was, [I understood this.] Of course, you didn't show proper remorse if you didn't wail or cry. But this was her feeling sorry for herself: "why didn't I go with you?" [Vera's mother would utter these words.]

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Much of this narrative is a digression about a room in the R home. It is in the former *velyka khata*[11] or the more modern and acceptably named "parlor," that Bill's body would have been laid out for the three-day mourning period that preceded the burial. Vera describes the room as a cool, quiet, private room where the nicer household articles were kept, for example the *kylyms* that her mother had on the wall. The room had the scent of candles, which meant that candles were burned in this room possibly for ritual purposes. Vera suggests that because the dead were laid out in this room and because candles were arranged and burned around the coffin, the room carried their scent.

Like Katherine, Vera is afraid of ghosts. Because she has seen a dead person in the *velyka khata*, she associates the room with death. So what did happen to Uncle Bill when he died? No one is helping this child with this. Like her siblings, Vera is too young to understand anything of the funerary rituals and is left to her own devices when it comes to processing death.

Vera returns to the topic of her uncles' deaths with an observation about her mother, Maria. Vera relates how, when Maria was feeling depressed, she would tearfully address the pictures of her brothers, Gus and Bill.[12] Maria's activity was akin to a supplicant's private reverie with an icon.[13] However, in this case, according to Vera, Maria would not be expressing grief, but instead simply crying and feeling sorry for herself. It was unnerving behavior for a child to observe and Vera was understandably unnerved. It is an oblique critique of Maria, that she did not protect her children from witnessing her more painful emotional moments. Her children were left alone to deal with their fears.

"Of course, you didn't show proper remorse if you didn't wail or cry, But this was her [Maria's] feeling sorry for herself…," Vera notes about the ritual. Her comment shows annoyance with her mother and with ritual activity. She holds little truck for the funerary ritual by reducing it to the behavioral components of wailing and crying. These gestures constituted "proper" remorse, Vera says with some sarcasm. The notion of ritual reaffirming bonds within a family seems not to have been applicable to the R family from Vera's perspective.

Personal Narrative: Vera (Ritual: Miscellaneous) #1

> 25 March 1995, pg. 39—*khram*
> *MJ: Did you celebrate the Feast of St. Peter and Paul?*
>
> VR: Yes. We didn't work that day. That was a big holiday at the Catholic church at Mundare...and where else?
>
> *MJ: I think these were Orthodox holidays.*
>
> VR: Yes. Ukrainian Catholics and Orthodox celebrate the same holidays. The Church of [St. Mary?] at Andrew had a feast day...the churches had their patron saint, and on that saint's day they would celebrate with a feast. In our area, our patron saint's day...we would have a feast. People from the neighboring communities, you'd invite them to your church celebration and then to your house. After the first invitation, they'd come year after year. You didn't have to invite them each year, unless they missed a year or two.
>
> Our neighbors, the Ls, went to every holiday, every holiday they had someplace to go. They called that *khram*. Our *khram* at home was on my birthday (November 8th). It was really the patron saint of the old church [St. Demitrius Ruthenian Greek Orthodox Church of Luzan].

#####

Vera reveals that for the *khram* of Saints Peter and Paul, the family did not work. This would be only normal, for there would be community pressure to cease labor and regardless of whether the Rs believed in what the church celebrated, they seem to have followed the proscriptions of church ritual activity.

Vera explains how people from neighboring communities would be invited to your church celebration and then to your home. The expectation was that year after year, people would attend your church's *khram* and you would be invited to their *khrams*. But Vera does not venture into specific terrain. Did the Rs attend *khram* or host *khram* guests? She leaves the question open to speculation, but her familiarity with *khram* observance would suggest that there has been some level of involvement. However by way of comparison, the neighbors, the Ls, "went to every holiday, every holiday they had someplace to go," Vera says with some amazement. This implies that the Rs did not participate in every holiday (*khram*) and did not always have someplace to go, unlike the highly social L family.

Personal Narrative: Vera (Ritual: Miscellaneous) #2

In a second miscellaneous narrative, Vera reveals just how detailed her knowledge of Ukrainian-Canadian ritual is and how well she has retained the detail.

> 25 March 1995, pg. 41—*khram*
> Mother's birthday was celebrated on August 28th. The word they used, there were two feasts : *bohoroditsa*, it's like "God's birth" and this was called "*velyka*"—the big, the main birth of God, *velyka bohoroditsa*; and somewhere earlier, there was a smaller *bohoroditsa*: I don't know if they called it that. This was August 28th. And this was when they had *khram* at Shandro Church. There was a family there, Kapitski. Father and mother used to go to their house.
>
> #####

It has been over fifty years since she left the community where the Ukrainian-Canadian ritual calendar was observed or where she might have heard terms like *bohoroditsa* used. Furthermore, she knows that it was Shandro Church where *khram* was observed on August 28th, her mother's birthday, and that her parents would not only travel the miles to Shandro for the *khram* but then go on to the Kapitski home afterwards. The Kapitskis were members of Shandro Church.[14] It would seem that John and Maria did not take their family with them when they traveled to the Shandro *khram*. Thus, the R children were left at home to tend the farm and did not have the opportunity of this particular community gathering.

Personal Narrative: Vera (Calendar Ritual: Christmas) #1

Vera has clear and surprisingly detailed narratives about the major calendar ritual observances in the Ukrainian calendar cycle: Christmas, *Malanka*, *Iordan*, Easter, *Zeleni Sviata* and *Ivana*. This would indicate that for some years during her youth in the 1920s, and possibly into the 1930s, the R family paused to celebrate particular ritual days. Without indicating "when," Vera speaks of her mother's "trying" to prepare the traditional Ukrainian dishes for Christmas Eve. Vera's narrative is somewhat contradictory in that initially she states that the R family did not start off its Christmas Eve ritual meal with *kutia*, but then she goes on to describe how her mother cooked the *kutia* and that the family did, indeed, start with the ritual dish.

> 25 March 1995, pg. 40—Christmas ritual dishes
> *MJ: Did your Mother fix the twelve traditional Ukrainian dishes?*
>
> VR: Yes, she tried. I don't know if she ever actually had twelve, but she had meatless and no-dairy dishes. Fish. You can have fish.
>
> *MJ: Do you remember what the dishes were?*
>
> VR: Well, you started off with the *kutia*. We didn't [start off with *kutia*].
>
> *MJ: Katherine remembers kutia.*
>
> VR: Well, maybe in the old, old house [the *khata*]. [Brother] Sam remembers them bringing the calf in and walking him around to remind them of Christ being born in a stable.
>
> And the last time Pete [husband] and I were in Glendon, years ago, maybe it was at Christmastime...Nellie [Pete's eldest sister]...put straw and hay on the table and then she put a tablecloth over it...to symbolize the stable. They didn't bring the calf in. [Laughs]

> Well, we would start with the cooked wheat, some of it was sweetened, some of it Mother would put poppy seeds in: we had a choice. We would have fish, boiled fish. I think it was cold. We'd have beets cooked with dried mushrooms. Cabbage rolls made with only rice and flavored with onion and vegetable oil. I guess we'd have sauerkraut and bread, *kolache*. And we'd have dill pickles, no *kvass*—that was somebody else's custom, and broad beans. Some of these things I didn't like. But I don't know that we had twelve dishes, maybe a dish of just dried mushrooms and two kinds of fish. We'd probably have herring.
>
> *MJ: What about dried fruit...*
>
> VR: Yes. That would be our desert. We'd have dried fruit, all cooked together—dried peaches, apricots, apples, raisins...
>
> *MJ:...vushki?*
>
> VR: I don't think mother made ...*vushki*. You see, mother was not a real cook. She didn't like to cook.

#####

Initially, Vera defers to the remembered narratives of her elder siblings, Sam and Katherine, for I prompt her a bit about Katherine's recalling *kutia*. But then she goes on to give a fairly comprehensive account of what the R family ate on Christmas Eve. She also addresses the changes that must have occurred between the days of the elder children, and her own, later circle. The elders, represented by Nancy, Katherine and others, have told stories of how a calf was brought into the *khata* "to remind them of Christ being born in a stable." But at some nebulous point, this ritual activity ceased. As a child, as a youth, Vera did not have the intriguing experience of watching a calf being led into the house and its behavior once inside. However, she did behold, with some keen interest, the preparation of comestibles.

In summation, Vera has a definitive sense of Christmas ritual patterns, what you can have, which implies what you cannot have. She knows how ritual observance was carried out and the level of her detail would seem to indicate not only that she was watching, but also that the ritual activity was memorable for her. For all of their protestations to the contrary, the R family enacted some ritual activity which must have held meaning for the family.

Personal Narrative: Vera (Calendar Ritual: Christmas) #2

Some years later, in a second narrative, Vera returns to the R family's celebration of Christmas. On this occasion, Vera stresses the pressures of assimilation on ritual observance, the non-superstitious nature of the R family, and its "other-ness," that is, the family's not being like other people in other families.

17 January 2003, tape index at #107 – Christmas
MJ: Do you remember things like when you celebrated Christmas?

VR: Oh, I remember those things.

MJ: Did you all go out and look for the first star?

VR: No.

MJ: What about kutia? Did your father throw it at the ceiling?

VR: No, he didn't. We weren't that…Some of the other people were more…I guess…superstitious. Now I shouldn't say that, Monica. Because Sam [elder brother] remembers them, of course they lived in that first house [the *khata*] with the thatched roof with the mud floor...that they brought in a calf and walked it around the house. That was the stable that Jesus was born in and that. And then they put straw under the table cloth…well, things like in the manger for the stable. They did that. Now they might have thrown that [*kutia*] over when Sam was younger.

As they were there, longer, in Canada, they became more sensitive, although the English liked those customs. They [the English] liked to come around and help eat the food. [She laughs.] They [the English] didn't make fun of those things.

MJ: Did they spread poppy seeds around.

VR: No, not in my time, but they may have in Sam's and Bill's [elder brothers] time….when I was that little…I don't remember much until I was about ten years old. And then I became aware of things like fasting for Christmas Eve. You were supposed to fast. If not fast, not eat at all, you had to make sure you didn't eat any of the foods that had any fat, dairy products, meat…And usually during the day, we had very little, because we were going to have a big meal…

MJ: And so your mother, for Christmas Eve, she did fix the twelve meatless dishes.

> VR: Oh, yes, for Christmas Eve.
>
> *MJ: Then what was Christmas Day like?*
>
> VR: Well, it was different in that on Christmas Day we'd have cabbage rolls and a little bit of bacon and fat, you know, other things like that…and we'd maybe have a roast turkey, but this was much later. Sam and Al and those [elder siblings] would have remembered something different, Monica. And then of course, we'd keep on eating that other stuff, too [the Christmas Eve meatless feast]. We didn't throw it away. You know, every morning, we'd eat some of that *kutia*, that wheat. I think, I remember, maybe about a week or so before Christmas, mother would bring in a jar or something of wheat. And we would go through it, to make sure there weren't any little stones or anything in it. We would go through it. And then on January 6th, in the morning, she [mother] would have the wheat in a big pot, because wheat swells. It swells terrifically when you cook it….Anyhow, she'd cook the wheat all day. And by evening, it would be ready. And she'd sweeten it with honey….
>
> You know, we weren't, mother and father weren't as church-going and religious, so they didn't follow everything the way other people, like the Ls would…stuck to the Old Country things. But mother and father may have, in the early days, [followed Ukrainian ritual practice], after their arrival in Alberta.

#####

Throughout this second narrative about Christmas, Vera differentiates between her time and an earlier time, when oral evidence would seem to indicate that the R family observed Christmas in a more traditional Ukrainian-Canadian manner: they brought a calf into the *khata*, put straw under the tablecloth, tossed *kutia*. But according to Vera, by her own time, the R family had backed away from the "superstitious" nature evinced by the Ukrainian-Canadians around them. This, Vera attributes to sensitivity, that the Rs were sensitive to criticism coming from Anglo-Canadians. Surely some of the other neighbors who continued to observe traditional Ukrainian-Canadian Christmas rituals were sensitive to Anglo-Canadian criticism as well. Vera stresses the point that her family, her parents, were not like others in their community, for they "weren't as church-going and religious" as others in the community.

In this narrative, Vera once again implies that she knows the ritual rules, for example, that one fasted before Christmas. Her description of *kutia*-making is a lovely rare vignette of a family working together to facilitate ritual observance. Ultimately, she returns to her initial point, that "the Rs didn't follow everything the way other people [did],…stuck to the Old Country things." Vera's use of the verb "stuck" is probably deliberate. Following her line of reasoning, observing the old ways would constitute being "stuck."

Personal Narrative: Vera (Calendar Ritual: *Malanka*)

There was "ceremony" in the R home. Vera attests to this in the following narrative and surprises herself, that she remembers as much as she does. She insinuates that she is an outsider in her own culture—as if to say, "we just did this stuff; I don't know what it means."

> 25 March 1995, pg. 42—Ritual greetings and *Malanka*
> VR: But every village had its rituals....All I remember of ceremony at home, both at Christmas and Easter, is that we'd all stand up. We'd all stand at the table and wait for father to say at Christmastime, "Christ is born." And at Easter, he'd say, "*Khristos voskres.*—Christ is risen" [tears] And we would reply, "*vo yeastenos voskres*" Now, I don't know today what "*vo yeastenos*" means. "He is risen, indeed"? I just remember that.
>
> *MJ: Did you go outside to spot the Star of Bethlehem?*
>
> VR: No, not that I remember.
>
> *MJ: New Year's Eve, Malanka. Did anyone dress up, run around...?*
>
> VR: No, we didn't. Just a minute. We went caroling at Christmastime. And some people went caroling, but that wasn't called a carol. It was called a *Malanka*. It was a different kind of a song. It was that "He's already born." *Malanka* was at New Year's. [We sang one type of song at Christmas, and another—*Malanka* song— at New Year's.] But I think that [*Malanka songs*] had more to do with throwing wheat up to tell you what kind of harvest for the coming year, than Christmas did.

#####

We can gather here that the Rs did participate in community, neighborly, holiday activities. The siblings went caroling at Christmastime, a traditional Ukrainian-Canadian activity on Christmas Day. In Vera's time, as a youth, caroling seems to have been organized and sponsored by the community hall or the church. Vera goes on to make a further distinction, that there were others who caroled on another day, New Year's Day and that this type of carol was called a *Malanka* carol. She recalls that the language in the

Malanka carol was different from that of a Christmas carol. In *Malanka* songs, the reference was to Christ's already having been born. She ends by explaining that *Malanka* songs, unlike Christmas carols, had to do with foretelling the future, for example, "what kind of harvest for the coming year." The point has already been made, but this level of detail is extraordinary from one who would like to make the argument that her family turned away from such traditional activities.

Personal Narrative: Vera (Calendar Ritual: *Iordan*) #1

In the following brief narratives about the R family's observance of *Iordan*, Vera stresses the intermittent nature of the family's church attendance. Since, in her mind, *Iordan* was a church event, the family only fleetingly celebrated this calendar ritual. Nevertheless, Vera later recounts how her parents did rise early to have water blessed at the church. They brought the blessed water home and had each child take a sip of it.

> 25 March 1995, pg. 44—*Iordan*
> *MJ: For the Feast of the River Jordan on January 19th, did you participate with the other people?*
>
> VR: No. We weren't regular church-goers. A lot of this was done at the church. I can remember mother and father getting up early and going there and coming back with a bottle of holy water.

#####

Personal Narrative: Vera (Calendar Ritual: *Iordan*) #2

> 17 January 2003, tape index #162-—*Iordan*
> *MJ: Do you have any recollection of [Iordan]?*
>
> VR: I don't know much about that except…that I remember that mother and father would leave early and go to church with their bottles of water. And we'd get up and we'd be starving for breakfast. You know. By the time they'd come home with it and then we'd have a sip of it, I suppose. Mother would put the rest of it away, "for medicinal purposes." [Vera chuckles at the thought of this.]
>
> *MJ: Did she believe in the medical qualities of that Blessed Water?*

> VR: Oh, I don't think so. It was more like a superstition. I don't think she was…Neither she, nor father, thought that way. Grandmother [Elena] thought it was blessed.

#####

Here, regarding the efficacy of blessed water, Vera makes a distinction between what her mother believes and what her grandmother believes. The "superstition" that enables Vera's grandmother to accept the healing and medicinal power of the blessed water, is something that her mother has rejected. However, her mother does follow through on the form of the *Iordan* observance: she gives each child a sip of the holy water. Elena implicitly accepts, Maria performs the ritual gestures but seems not to have deeply incorporated their meaning. By Vera's time, there has been a ritual slipping away. *Iordan* means little to her.

Personal Narrative: Vera (Calendar Ritual: Easter) #1

The next three brief narratives, two concerning Easter and one regarding *Zeleni Sviata*, all come as pleasant recollections. For Vera, they are joyous calendar rituals with some imperfections. In the first Easter narrative, Vera notes that in her attempts to "draw that line around the egg," she was never quite successful in the way that she wanted to be. Nevertheless, she associates Easter with the happy activity of her mother's making *pysanky*, of the colorfulness of it all. The exterior form of celebrating Easter, the attendant preparations such as egg-writing, are foremost in her mind.

> 25 March 1995, pg. 18—Easter
> *MJ: What caught your fancy? Your brothers and sisters? Animals?*
>
> VR: For me, I think it was Easter coming and mother making Easter eggs. She colored them and I guess [elder sisters] Nancy and Katherine helped then. I remember trying. The first thing you do is you draw that line around the egg. I could never get it to come together [she laughs]. It looked so easy.

#####

Of all the calendar rituals it is Easter that Vera is attracted to. It must have given her some delight to watch her mother and her two elder sisters all working together creatively on their simple *pysanky*. The activity is no doubt noteworthy for Vera because it is a family activity and she is a part of it, not isolated and outside of it. And the activity is a non-work activity, that is, it is dedicated to ritual celebration and not to the success of the agricultural and economic venture, namely, the farm. Here one has the sense that honoring tradition is not a negative thing: it is not "mumbo-jumbo." Easter seems to be a ritual that drew the R family together.

Personal Narrative: Vera (Calendar Ritual: Easter) #2

Again, in this second Easter narrative, Vera acknowledges that Easter "was a pleasant time." But here, she focuses on the political battles going on in the Ukrainian bloc community and their implications for the celebration of Easter. The emphasis is on the difficulty of properly carrying out the steps to observe Easter.

> 17 January 2003, tape index #276-on—Easter
> VR: I remember a little bit of Easter, because that too, was a pleasant time. Except that, by that time, there had been a fight in the church. And the old people, like the Ls and all, they went to their church [the original pioneer church, St. Demitrius Ruthenian Greek Orthodox Church of Luzan] to have all their stuff blessed. And we had to drive a long way to have our baskets blessed. And sometimes they would be blessed at the [Pruth] community hall. The priest would come there or… at somebody's house. It was much harder.

#####

Essentially, Vera describes a situation in which what was formerly pleasant, and she seems to have warm memories of Easter as a child, has now become, if not unpleasant, then "harder." Community factions could not come to an agreement, and hence, all suffered. Thus, for Vera, if the R family stayed away from church because of their non-religious and non-ritual stance, they also encountered some difficulty when they did decide to attend a church/ritual observance, as a result of community disagreement.

Personal Narrative: Vera (Calendar Ritual: *Zeleni Sviata)*

Bracketing the following narrative with "I remember" and "I remember that," Vera attributes some attachment to this calendar ritual, Vera presents *Zeleni Sviata* as something that "people" would do. In other words, she distances herself and the R family from this springtime ritual, but at the same time ascribes to it a certain lightness—the creation of designs with leaves, using saliva as adhesive, on the interior windows. Her short narrative is colorful: this is what one did to observe *Zeleni Sviata*.

> 25 March 1995, pg. 18—Green Holidays, Epiphany, *Zeleni Sviata*
> And I remember "Green Sunday." Then the leaves on the trees would be coming out and the people would decorate their houses [with them]. They'd tear branches off and tie them to the dual posts on the veranda or they'd take the leaves off...and I suppose, with our saliva...and stick them to the window panes inside the house. We'd make them stick and we'd make designs. I remember that.

#####

Only at the conclusion of her narrative does Vera include the Rs among "the people" who would decorate their houses for *Zeleni Sviata*. She uses the pronouns "we" and "our" instead of the pronoun "they," for "the people." In speaking of *Zeleni Sviata*, Vera realizes that the R family, too, marks this calendar ritual, like others in the community.

Personal Narrative: Vera (Calendar Ritual: *Ivana*) #1

Among her sisters, Vera alone describes *Ivana*.[15] Her narrative is instructive. She reveals among other things, the depth of her awareness of calendar rituals. There is no hesitation as she gives the date of *Ivana*, July 7th. At a distance of perhaps seventy years, and having been separated from life among Ukrainian-Canadians for fifty years, Vera can still expatiate about *Ivana*.

> 25 March 1995, pg. 42—*Ivana*
> *MJ: What about name days? Did you celebrate various birthdays on your name days...*

VR: Father's name was John [*Ivan*]. There is a holiday on the 7th of July that is *Ivana*. I can remember one time that the neighbors and friends came around and celebrated his birthday. But I don't know that that was his birthday. I don't really know when his birthday was.[16] It could have been then.

You see, they came and it was supposed to be a surprise. And when they came, they had made a big wreath out of dried plants…I'm not sure…it was kind of big, they ran around the house trying to put it over him. Eventually, they caught him and put it on—that was supposed to mean something, I don't know. And then, mother said that the custom was, if you were sick, you'd put that wreath in a tub of water and sat in it and that was supposed to [she laughs] cure you.[17]

MJ: At least it helped your hemoroids...

VR: Or your lumbago. [more laughter]

MJ: Did he have a good time at that party?

[Vera makes a silent gesture indicating that her father got very drunk.]

MJ: Did he?[Get drunk?].You remembered that. Was he really angry?

VR: He was too drunk to be angry. He couldn't stand up. He kept falling down.

MJ: What was he drinking?

VR: Oh, I guess moonshine.

MJ: Pretty strong stuff!

VR: And they picked him up and carried him to bed. I can't imagine what kind of a headache he had the next day! I remember that.

MJ: How old do you think you were [when this happened]?

VR: Seven or eight years old.[18]

#####

If Vera were, say, eight years old at the time of this *Ivana* celebration, it would have taken place in 1924 and her father would have been nearing fifty years of age. The narrative hints at assimilation issues, for Vera there may be confusion over birthdays and name days. By the time of her childhood, she intimates that birthdays were being celebrated among Ukrainian-Canadians. Birthday celebrations were an Anglo-Canadian calendar ritual, not a Ukrainian-Canadian one. On the other hand, perhaps she realizes that birthdays were name days in the traditional sense. Thus, Vera's narrative points to the gradual blurring of one calendar ritual into another, the name day becomes the birthday observance.

For *Ivana* the revelers brought a wreath of herbs to place around the reluctant John R. Perhaps they meant to "crown" him with the wreath or perhaps their particular tradition was to place the wreath around him like an inner tube. As an observer at the time, the young Vera is not completely familiar with the ritual, and thus her mother explains what is going on. All Vera knows is that the activity is "supposed to mean something." The equation is that a ritual equals some symbolic meaning.

In the case of John R's *Ivana* festivities, the herb wreath would afford him curative powers if and when he needed them. Why John R resisted being crowned by the *Ivana* wreath remains outside the purview of Vera's narrative. However, she becomes jocular when she tries to visualize her father curing himself of something by sitting in a tub of water with the herb wreath. Unfortunately for John, the revelry gets out of hand or the spirited beverage gets ahead of him. It is with empathy that Vera wonders what kind of headache he must have had from the ritual celebration.

Personal Narrative: Vera (Calendar Ritual: *Ivana*) #2

Eight years after her first *Ivana* narrative, Vera again recalls the *Ivana* celebration for her father. Many of the features of the first narrative are present in the second, for example, the connection between a birthday and a name day, knowledge of the particularities of date and action, the crowd of neighbors—"people"— who come with a wreath, her father's inebriation.

> 17 January 2003, tape index #310-339—*Ivana*
> I remember one time, that was a *khram*. Somebody decided to celebrate Father's…ah…I don't know if it was his birthday or his name day, *Ivana*. Saint John's. The 7th of July. I know that.

> Anyhow, I can remember…that all these people came and were kissing each other and all that. And then, somebody came with a big wreath. And it was made up of dried herbs and plants. And they tried to crown father. And he ran away…and all that kind of stuff. Well, by the end of the day, father couldn't stand up. He tried to pick up an apple that fell on the floor and he couldn't get up. The guests helped to put him to bed. I don't know, but they kept that…mother saved the wreath. [She said] that if you put it around… the herbs in it would help to protect against illness, say, if they were infused in water or laid on the body. So much of this, I just vaguely remember.

#####

This second narrative affords more detail. *Ivana* celebrants kiss each other and attempt to "crown" John R with the herbal wreath. For Vera in this later version of the *Ivana* narrative, "people" come to *Ivana* and not "neighbors and friends." She communicates by this that ultimately she sees that the house is crowded with kissing strangers who are running about, chasing her father. It is a picture of isolation. Vera is an outsider, simply an observer, not a participant in the *Ivana* festivities.

The child-Vera knows that her father is three sheets to the wind when she watches him trying unsuccessfully to pick up an apple. But the point of interest is that, for Vera, her mother saves the wreath. Is it possible that Maria believes in the power of the ritual object, the herbal wreath? Vera proceeds to explain that the herbs in the wreath could be used in various ways, depending upon the situation. First, evidently the "big" wreath could be threaded over the head and around the body "to protect against illness." Second, the herbs in the wreath could be "infused in water" and the *Ivana* subject could sit in this water or have it dropped or poured over a problem-spot. Thirdly, the herbs from the wreath could simply be "laid on the body." In all these ways, protection and/or cures could be effected from the *Ivana* wreath. This is quite specific knowledge. It would seem that Vera learned from her mother the fine points of how the herbs comprising the *Ivana* wreath would protect and cure. Since Vera's mother saved the *Ivana* wreath, it is not untoward to suggest that she believed, in some measure, the power of the herbs to keep illness at bay and to cure, or at least, in the power of the wreath.

And thus Vera has revealed, somewhat innocently, that although in her view, the R family stands firmly on its identity as a non-religious, non-superstitious, modern, assimilated family, it also quietly preserves Ukrainian-Canadian tradition in the form of certain magical beliefs, for example, the potency of an *Ivana* herb-wreath.

Concluding remarks on Vera's personal narratives

First, and foremost, Vera adds consistency to the view held by all the R sisters that the R family is ultimately non-superstitious, that is, it is a family that does not believe in or observe Ukrainian-Canadian rituals. Attendant to her insistence that the Rs are not superstitious, is the corollary that the R family is not particularly church-going, that is, their church activity ranges from intermittent to indifferent. She reduces the priest's prayers over her sister's christening to "mumbo jumbo," and notes that because of assimilation pressures, the family quickly shed the practices—such as bringing a calf into the house at Christmas— that could associate it with Old Country ways.

Nevertheless, in some contradiction to the R family "stance" regarding ritual traditions, Vera describes a rich and varied array of Ukrainian-Canadian ritual observance on the part of the R family, particularly in the arena of calendar rituals. Her knowledge of the observance of Christmas, *Iordan*, Easter, *Zeleni Sviata*, *Ivana* and the occasional *khram* is quite detailed, even colorful. To be sure, some of what she describes, had transpired before her time and was thus not part of her personal experience, but in general, the ritual activity she addresses in her narratives takes place during her childhood and youth. Unconsciously, Vera communicates that the R family did indeed find some need that was met by its long-term observance of rite of passage and calendar Ukrainian-Canadian rituals. Although she might ascribe some of this activity to social pressure, that is, for example, the necessity for christening in order for a proper burial, Vera does not ascribe all of this activity to outside pressure. Surely, celebrating christenings and calendar events, such as Christmas, Easter or *Ivana*, were moments of bonding for the R family in which they reconfirmed or reminded themselves who they were and what they stood for.

Yet, Vera's narratives do infer that, in general, neither she, nor the R family were inside of ritual belief. In other words, they went through the motions of the complex of ritual activity at Christmas, but did not ascribe to the symbolism of ritual activity or the meaning behind the symbolism, certainly not fully, as did grandmother Elena.

Although the R family was an integral part of its Ukrainian-Canadian community at Soda Lake and participated in community-wide activities spearheaded by the church, the school and the community hall, Vera's narratives, as do her sisters', do not give a sense of community involvement. Instead, her narratives infer that the R family kept somewhat to itself. By way of contrast, Vera notes that the L family, neighbors to the R family, was surprisingly gregarious socially. For example, the L family always had a church and parishioners to visit when various church *khrams* occurred. In contrast, the Rs did not, nor did it seem to matter a great deal to them. Perhaps in this narrative instance, Vera has "adjusted" the past to fit her present memories of it.

Vera seems to have reserved a special place in her soul for the pleasurable aspects of Easter and *Zeleni Sviata*. The attractive *pysanky* and the delight of installing nature's green in the house brought a lighter mood, a bit of enjoyment into her memories. However, Vera's narratives suggest that the R family is a serious group of individuals. One does not hear much laughter in her narratives.

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[1] The eleven children in the R family fell into two groups, based largely on birth order and age. Thus, Nancy (1908), Katherine (1910) and Anne (1912) form part of the elder group, which, in its entirety consisted of Al, Sam, Bill, Nancy, Katherine and Anne. The second and younger group of R sisters consisted of Vera (1916), Alice (1919) and Margaret (1921) who were part of the later group of five siblings, that is, George, Vera, Alice, Margaret and Walter.

[2] Vera graduated from high school at Hairy Hill, AB, winning the Governor-General and Lady Willingdon Award, the highest award in the Inspectorate for the excellence of her final exams, the first Ukrainian-Canadian female to be so honored. That Vera was supported by her family to pursue academics to such a level is significant. Some years earlier, Vera's brother Alex, the eldest R child, won an award as well, when he graduated from the eighth grade in Vegreville, AB.

Alex speaks of his experience. "Conscious of the sacrifice my parents were making to send me to school and conscious that this was my opportunity to leave the rigors of farm life behind, I took my studies seriously. My efforts paid off. The eighth grade leaving examinations were directed by the provincial authorities in Edmonton. I was confident I had done well on the exams....When the results of the exams were published in *The Vegreville Observer*, I was thrilled beyond words to see my name heading the list....To cap my achievement, I received the award of a bronze medal by His Excellency the Duke of Devonshire, Governor General of Canada 'as the candidate receiving the highest marks in the Vegreville Inspectorate at the Public School Leaving Examination held in July 1919.' ...Father, and especially Mother, were pleased with my success and I felt a great deal of pleasure that they were proud of what I had done" (Alex R, 2002: 58).

That these two siblings won such awards is an extraordinary testament to the R family's dedication to studies. Vera's accomplishment, and that of her elder brother, fulfills part of the R family identity that said "we're smart."

[3] The community's pioneer church was established in 1905 and named St. Demitrius Ruthenian Greek Orthodox Church of Luzan. The schism, developing in the late 1920s among the pioneer church's Ukrainian-Canadian parishioners, between those who wanted their familiar Russian Orthodox priest and those who wanted a more modern and politically sensitive Ukrainian Orthodox priest, effectively divided the community. The R family sided with the "modernist" faction. They wanted to see a Ukrainian priest in their church. Because the "modernists" backed away from services by a Russian priest, they took it upon themselves to build a new church, the Pruth Church, but the building process took time. In the interim, all of the families of the "modernist" persuasion, found themselves without a church. Thus it was incumbent upon them, and this includes the R family, to travel further to have their *Iordan* service or their Easter basket blessed by a Ukrainian Orthodox priest. Christenings were held in private homes. Sometimes church services would be held at the Pruth Community Hall. Ultimately the new church, built

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diagonally across the road from this community hall, was completed and dedicated in 1932.

[4] Margaret R was born October 24th, 1921. Vera would have been five years old at the time of Margaret's birth and christening.

[5] According to *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged* (1961), *mumbo jumbo* is "a complicated and sometimes purposeless activity intended to obscure and confuse" (1961: 1487).

[6] Dionne quintuplets, the first set of quintuplets known to have survived into adulthood. Yvonne, Annette, Cécile, Émilie, and Marie Dionne were born May 28, 1934, to Oliva and Elzire Dionne, a French-Canadian couple, at Callander, Ontario, Canada. They were identical quintuplets; that is, they all came from one fertilized ovum….
The birth of the Dionne quintuplets created a tremendous sensation. During their first few years, their photograph was printed in newspapers around the world; they appeared in motion pictures; they "endorsed" many commercial products; and they attracted tens of thousands of tourists to the Callander area. The province of Ontario made the girls wards of the crown for a time. Their parents regained control after a court fight, but their earnings remained in a trust fund managed by their father (*Collier's Encyclopedia* 1997 (8): 238).
The irony in Vera's narrative rests upon the fact that the Dionne quintuplets in Canada were healthy and famous; whereas, the Chornivka quadruplets in Bukovyna died anonymous deaths.

[7] Vera's elder brother Bill talks of Vera's illness and their mother's turning to *Iordan*-blessed Holy Water to ward off death.

MJ: To go back briefly to Iordan, *can you tell me how long your Mother continued to use holy water as potentially something for healing. When various of your brothers and sisters got sick…I know that George [Bill's younger brother] was ill for awhile. Did she ever use holy water with him?*

Bill: I don't remember. Vera was very sick. And in that case, I think she [Mother] gave her [Vera] holy water. Whether Vera swallowed it or not, I don't know. Mother had holy water for a long time. She venerated it.

MJ: Would she use the holy water for like things like if you had a sore throat or a cold? Or…

Bill: No

MJ: Or…it was really more serious?

Bill: It was more serious. When of course she'd turn to the Lord. They had it when Vera was very, very sick. As a matter of fact, in the evening, she [Mother] was making candles out of beeswax. She thought Vera would be dead by, by morning. [Bill's eyes fill with tears.] But somehow the fever broke and she started to recuperate. She was very, very close to dying.

Interview with Bill R. 18 February 2001, Calgary, AB, p. 8.

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[8] According to *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged* (1991), "superstition" is "a belief, conception, act, or practice resulting from ignorance, unreasoning fear of the unknown or mysterious, morbid scrupulosity, trust in magic or chance, or a false conception of causation" (1991: 2296).

[9] In this narrative, I have broken a cardinal rule of professional interviewing. I have leapt from my stance as a distanced and even-handed interviewer, and jumped in as my mother's daughter. For Vera, the title of this narrative is "I was supposed to die. My mother cared very little for me." I have leapt in to contradict Vera's interpretation of her mother's ritual gesture, the lighting of the candles in the face of impending death. Essentially, Vera and I get caught playing an old game, a daughter's attempting to soothe her mother's hurt. In insisting that Vera's mother probably did love her and that the lighting of the candles was an act that indicated this, I have fabricated ritual beliefs and more-or-less scrambled Ukrainian-Canadian tradition, all in an effort to make my mother feel better.

[10] The nearest neighbor to the R family, homesteading on the quarter-section immediately to the northeast or diagonally across from the R quarter-section, was an Anglo-Canadian family, the A.M. B family, from Nova Scotia. The A.M.Bs, who were in the area first, were critical of Ukrainian-Canadians in general and fought hard to keep Ukrainian-Canadian teachers from Soda Lake and Pruth community schools. For their part, the R family considered the A.M.Bs to be poor farmers. Although relations between the R family and the A.M.B family were neighborly, the R family felt consistent pressure from the A.M.B's to become Anglicized.

[11] Vera calls the room a "parlor." In the first home, the *khata*, that her parents built out of logs, adobe and thatch, this room was called the *velyka khata* or "Great Room." Located in the southeast corner of the south-facing *khata*, the *velyka khata* was the room in which the icons were hung. This room was reserved for special occasions, for guests, and for the presentation of the dead before burial. It was a room one entered in a reverent manner.

When the R family moved out of the *khata* in 1905 and into its first Anglo-Canadian house, completed in 1912, the *velyka khata* survived but its name was changed. The Rs gave it an English designation, that of "parlor."

[12] Vera's elder brother George also speaks of their mother's grieving for her brothers.
George: It was a tragedy, a tremendous tragedy. They [Gus and Bill] were young, powerful. And they died. Boonka [Elena, their mother] was smitten very badly [by their deaths] and so was Grandfather S.
MJ: Your Mother [Maria] *was "smitten" as well.*
George: Yes, because she used to cry always in front of the pictures she had in the kitchen. And I used to come in and see her crying and wonder why she was crying. She was crying the religious wailing and weeping of the Jews at the Wailing Wall [ritual keening]. I didn't know then. And knowing what I know now about the Wailing Wall, I think it was that kind of a deal with her. [A ritualistic kind of wailing] Because they [Gus

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and Bill and their sister, Maria] didn't live around each other: they were separated. If they were very close to one another all of the time, that would have been a different story, but when you're all together all of your life, then you're going to be more affected.
Interview with George R. 13-14 June 1996. Toronto, ON, p. 21.

[13] Whether Maria keened before the pictures of her brothers, or simply wept and spoke quietly to their images probably depends upon which R sibling was observing her at any particular moment. Vera's description of Maria's behavior suggests an Orthodox parishioner unburdening herself before a favored icon.

[14] The Kapitskis and Maria all came from the village of Chornivka in Bukovyna. Mrs. Kapitski and Maria seem to have formed a friendship and tried to maintain it through infrequent visits during *khram*.

In an interview with Vera's brother Bill, the relationship with the Kapitski family is briefly outlined.
Bill: And there was this Kapitski family, they lived up north of us. They went to Bukovina School District, where Uncle George Sr., was. And they were from the same village as Mother was—Mother often spoke of them. And Father and Mother would go and visit them. There would be a *khram* [a patron saint's feast], a big feast day up there. Mother and Father would go with a horse, it was about twenty miles away. They'd go one day and come back the next.
Interview with Bill R. Surrey, B.C. 14 July 1994. Tape 2, pg.3

[15] *Ivana* [*na Ivana*] is the feast day of St. John the Baptist, July 7th. It is a summer celebration of youth and love. According to Katherine Orlecki, a second-generation Bukovynian-Canadian who was born in Toporivtsi, barely a mile from Chornivka, "[St. John's Day] was a holy day (*svieto*) and supposedly a good time to plant cucumbers for them to be extra long" ('*Bude duzhe dovhe*,' Katherine laughs as she relates this to Robert Klymasz.) (Klymasz 1992: 37).

[16] In his unpublished autobiography, Alex R states that his father, John R, was born on August 27, 1875. Alex cites no documentary evidence for this date. When asked about sources, Alex responded to me that he just seemed to remember this date.

[17] Scholar Sarah D. Phillips, in her research among contemporary Ukrainian women folk healers notes that among the *babky* ["elderly women who perform magico-religious rituals…to treat a variety of maladies"] some boast a wide expertise, whereas others are more narrowly specialized. Among specializations is the administering of herbal and other natural remedies to patients. Phillips encountered a folk healer who "always used herbs that she had braided into wreaths to be blessed by the local Greek Catholic priest on the festival of the 'Ninth Thursday,' the ninth Thursday after Easter" (Phillips 2004: 18).

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[18] Vera was born in 1916. If she were seven or eight years old at the time of the *Ivana* observance, this would have been in 1923 or 1924.

A Note About Alice

I interviewed Alice two years after interviewing her sister Nancy in Edmonton. Alice is fifth among the R sisters. Born in 1919, she is three years Vera's junior, nine and eleven years Katherine's and Nancy's junior, respectively. Physically Alice is a diminutive person with a sharp sense of style and color, and an eye for beauty. Her apartments have always been smartly appointed and before she retired from the business world she dressed with panache—high heels and attractive sheath dresses. I associate the color Chinese Red, a beautiful deep red-orange, with Alice. These days Alice's style is somewhat more relaxed and her colors tend to snappy pinks and turquoises. Alice is truculently part of the grey-haired ladies' Red Hat Society.[1] A keen political observer, Alice channels a significant amount of her energy and emotion into issues of state and national politics, writing letters to senators and representatives and volunteering at the polls during elections.

Alice never married. She was a single working woman to her retirement. She left the farm at Soda Lake to work in Ottawa, using the secretarial skills she had been taught in school, and then moved on to Cleveland, Fort Wayne, Chicago, and finally to the San Francisco Bay area, where she continues to live. Only when she was in Ottawa was Alice ever far, in terms of geographical distance, from her siblings. Her moves to Cleveland, Fort Wayne, Chicago and San Francisco coincided with family members being in these places.

For Alice, her mythical position in the R family is that of the rejected child, mythical because although there is family consensus on this as a fact, there is nothing extant to corroborate it. A number of other R siblings have also considered themselves rejected by their parents.[2] By the time Maria approached her sixth, seventh and eighth pregnancies, she was doubtless weary, and by the time of Alice's birth in 1919, Maria's ninth pregnancy, Maria had just buried two of her brothers.[3] It is also possible that she may have been seriously depressed at that time in her life. Nevertheless, Alice was told the story, principally by her elder sister Katherine, how as an infant, she never properly bonded to her mother.

As Katherine relates the story, shortly after Alice's birth Maria was sent to the hospital in Vegreville for treatment of an unknown disorder, leaving the nursing infant with her two oldest daughters, Nancy and Katherine, to bottle-feed. It didn't work. The nearest neighbor, who had an infant of her own, swooped in like an angel of mercy to collect the unhappy Alice and nursed and cared for her until Maria returned home. But for Katherine, the die was cast. Although Maria may very well have been too ill to care properly for her newly minted daughter, Alice was deemed as rejected by her mother. Indeed, Alice turned to Katherine and other siblings for support. All of her life, Alice has maintained a close relationship with Katherine. Alice lives in the San Francisco Bay Area, quite near Katherine.

By the time I came to talk with Alice, she knew that I'd already spent some time with Katherine, Nancy and Vera. Not only did she say that she could add little, but Alice also seemed edgy because she was not certain what to expect or what would be expected of her. Over and over Alice wondered aloud why she didn't remember certain things. She honestly did not hold memories that she felt she should have. But her narratives reveal the extent of change that was taking place in the R family. For example, Alice notes that at Christmas, the family had a modest Christmas tree, knowing full well that at an earlier time straw was placed under the table and under the tablecloth to mark a Ukrainian-Canadian Christmas. Alice's narratives point to the fading of ritual observance in the R family.

Personal Narrative: Alice (Rite of Passage: Marriage) #1

Alice was seven years old at the time of her eldest sister's (Nancy's) wedding.[4] This was the first wedding among the Rs and the only semi-traditional wedding that the Rs attempted to organize and host. Alice's narrative is striking for its omissions. She begins by noting that her sister, Nancy, is someone whom she does not recall in her childhood. This may indeed be the case since Nancy's "chores" around the homestead consisted of her working with her father in the fields and with other outdoor farm-related work. The year before she married, Nancy, by her own account, had been living away from home in Vegreville, undergoing training to become a practical nurse.

> 21 March 1997—Wedding of eldest sister
> AR: I don't remember [sister] Nancy when I was growing up.
>
> *MJ: I think they [Nancy and older brother Al] were actually gone.*
>
> AR: I remember when Nancy got married, the wedding.
>
> *MJ: Oh, do you? Good. Oh, tell me about that.*
>
> AR: Oh, I shouldn't have said that. I remember…I don't remember *her*. I remember the *day*. And one of the reasons I remember the day is because I got in the way, or something was going wrong, and father was angry at something and he had a strop! And I got stropped.
>
> *MJ: Oh.*
>
> AR: That's what I remember, Monica. [She laughs.] But [elder sister] Katherine had come home I guess, wherever, and she, if I remember correctly, I was sort of impressed. She had a fancier dress, you know. But I don't remember the service…
>
> *MJ: Do you remember the food or was there dancing after that?*
>
> AR: I expect there was, although I didn't remember, because funerals and weddings drew people. And there was a celebration, so there must have been. But I don't remember who was there or what…John's [the groom's] family would have been there…I don't remember that. I remember there was a wedding day, Nancy's wedding day. And I was at the wrong place at the right time.
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> #####

For Alice, it is the theme of her own isolation and the unhappy randomness of being the object of her father's frustration that seems to rise out of her narrative of Nancy's wedding. She clearly does not recall ritual aspects of the wedding or is unfamiliar with them. For example, at a traditional Ukrainian-Canadian wedding, the groom's parents would not have been attending the wedding party at the bride's family home. They would be waiting to greet the bride (and the groom) at their own home, as, indeed, they were. Alice does mention that there was probably dancing and a feast, because, in her mind, there usually was. It is interesting to observe that Alice associates weddings and funerals as similar events. Both are, indeed, rites of passage and elicit some of the same community behavior— the community coming together, the women gathering to prepare a generous array of dishes for all present. In Alice's words, "funerals and weddings drew people."

Nancy's wedding day is regrettably noteworthy to Alice as the day she was beaten with a leather strop by her father. Her transgression is unknown, but the results are unhappy and overshadowed all else for Alice. She sums it up for herself: "I was at the wrong place at the right time." Truly a victim here, Alice cannot help but suggest that she was a rejected child. She seems not to have been consoled for her hurt, for the wedding, which could have been a joyful experience for Alice, clearly was not.

On a brighter note, she observes the dress of her elder sister, Katherine. "I was sort of impressed," she says. The dress was "fancier." But Alice does not go on to say what the dress was fancier than. One is left to speculate on Katherine's pretty dress as a small girl looks up to her older sister.[5] Alice's noting the dress, being impressed by it, is also a mark of her quick appreciation of attractive matter. If Nancy's wedding was unpleasant for her, at least Alice derived some pleasure from a fetching costume.

Personal Narrative: Alice (Rite of Passage: Marriage) #2

Six years later, in a second interview, Alice returns to the topic of her eldest sister's wedding. Her second narrative does not deviate substantially from the earlier wedding narrative. Although, now Alice states plainly that the R family was nervous, for she says "everyone was on pins and needles." One could infer from this, that the R family was not accustomed to hosting such an important ritual event, and doubtless, there were emotional issues as well, for the eldest girl was leaving their fold.

> 25 January 2003—Nancy's Wedding
> AR: I remember Nancy's wedding.
>
> *MJ: Oh tell me, what do you remember about it.*

> AR: I really don't remember very much. I remember I got in the way and got shoved aside. Everyone was on pins and needles. She had a nice dress. And Katherine came home and sewed some clothes. And beyond that, I don't really know that much. I really don't. What year did she get married? I still…I was not even in my teens. I was just a kid.
>
> *MJ: But do you remember … if your father or your parents tied branches to the gateposts to invite people in, to show that there was a wedding? That they built a dance floor outside?*
>
> AR: Yes, there was a dance floor outside, but I don't remember branches. See, we lived way off the road.
>
> *MJ: What about the food. Do you remember any cooking going on?*
>
> AR: Oh, yes, and all the neighborhood women helped cook. The kitchen was always busy. It was the same with funerals. The neighborhood came and cooked. And they did that when father died.

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Alice reiterates her key recollection, that inadvertently in the way, she was "shoved aside." She must have been interested in some wedding-preparation detail and came into the center of the action, perhaps a bit too close for her father. The vivid and harsh detail of her father stropping her has been left out. There is a pretty dress in the narrative, but this time it is Nancy's dress. Alice has an eye for beauty. Only when prompted does Alice note the food and the dancing. She does go on to make the same connection between weddings and funerals: "the kitchen was always busy," she says. But here she goes further, for in Alice's narrative, Nancy's wedding becomes a segue to her father's funeral.[6]

It has already been stated that Nancy's was the first and only semi-traditional wedding that the R family hosted, a big day for the entire family. Alice attests to the family's nervousness about the event. What does this wedding mean to the R family? One can only speculate as to their unease. A wedding is certainly an opportunity to present family solidarity to the community; putting its best face forward, the family tries to say, "this is who we are." Of course, there are the myriad details of hosting the ritual event. The wedding guests have their expectations. The food, the spirits, the music, the dancing, all these details must be carefully arranged for they signal the family's ability to extend its hospitality, and the level of its ritual awareness, to the community. No doubt the R family wanted to be well-thought of in the community for the strength of its wedding (ritual) observation.

Personal Narrative: Alice (Rite of Passage: Death)

Talk of the family wedding leads Alice straight-away to a narrative about her father's death. John R died suddenly and quite unexpectedly of pneumonia in March of 1938. Constitutionally robust and, unfortunately, a heavy smoker, he was struck down at the age of sixty-three. There were no antibiotics to render miracles for him. Alice was nineteen years old when her father passed away.

> 25 January 2003, pg. 7—Father's death
> AR: Oh, yes. And all the neighborhood women helped cook [for the wedding]. The kitchen was always busy. It was the same with funerals. The neighborhood came and cooked. And they did that when father died.
>
> *MJ: Oh, can you tell me a little about his [passing]?*
>
> AR: Well, he got double pneumonia and he died in the hospital in Vegreville.
>
> *MJ: But did, for instance, they bring his body back home?*
>
> AR: Yes, his body was back home.
>
> *MJ: And was it set in one of the rooms?*
>
> AR: Yes, it was set in the so-called "parlor," which we rarely ever used.
>
> *MJ: Were there icons in that room? Religious pictures?*
>
> AR: Not that I remember.
>
> *MJ: Where was the parlor in the house? If you walked in, through the front door of the house, where was the parlor in the house.*
>
> [Alice draws a house floor plan in which the parlor is on the southeast side of the house. This is consistent with traditional Ukrainian *khata* configuration, wherein the *velyka khata*, or "great room," faces south and east to greet the rising sun.]

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In her narrative, Alice establishes certain ritual gestures around the funeral. Her father's body was laid-out in what was in effect the *velyka khata*, the south and east facing room of the home. Alice calls this room the "parlor," but does not recall whether icons were in this room. Alice does observe that the room was rarely used, inferring that it was not a common room, but a room reserved for special (ceremonial) purposes.

Alice's narrative is spare. It is characterized by absence. What took place during the period of mourning and during the funeral for John R? Were there ritual mourners, women who keened? What of the burial service? Was there a funeral dinner after the interment. This is not to criticize Alice's narrative, but simply to point out that Alice does not have words for what transpired before her.[7] At the age of nineteen, for her father's death, she seems to be on the outside of whatever is going on, not enough a part of it to recall it in any particular detail.

Personal Narrative: Alice (Calendar Ritual: Christmas) #1

When Alice speaks of calendar rituals observed by the R family, she mentions vestiges of Ukrainian-Canadian ritual that she remembers for Christmas when she says, "we had some straw in the house or something."

> 21 March 1997, tape index (#340-) –Christmas
> *MJ: So it's Easter that you remember the most clearly, as opposed to Christmas in terms of preparations and…*
>
> AR: Well, we had…I kind of remember a couple of times…we had some straw in the house or something. They [my parents] didn't grow up with the idea of a Christmas tree.
>
> *MJ: Oh yes, I know. But for instance, you don't remember at Christmastime going outside to see who could see the first star.*
>
> AR: Oh, no.
>
> *MJ: You don't remember any of that…*
>
> AR: We went caroling at Christmastime.

MJ: Did you?

AR: Oh, yes, with the church group, we went caroling. People came caroling to our place. There was always a little food or whatever.

MJ: Did you carry the little lanterns or not.

AR: Oh, no. You know it was miles from one place to another, Monica.

MJ: Yes. What I guess I'm learning from you is when certain things died out…and certain other things took precedence, because Bill [elder brother] clearly remembers making the little Ukrainian lanterns. And I tried to get him to describe how…'Oh, you just took some waxed paper and you did this…' He couldn't describe it, but 'oh yeah' he made those and the boys would go around and they would carry these lanterns…But you see, they were at the front end of the family.

AR: No, I know. Yes. When my parents were younger, they were not as tired or jaded or anything else. But we went caroling with people from the church, and we went by sled. And I remember even sometimes that we slept on somebody's floor, because we were going on the next day. But don't ask me who or where or what, I don't recall that.

MJ: And were the carols in Ukrainian?

AR: Yes.

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Alice makes special note to add that her parents' Christmas tradition did not consist of a Christmas tree. Essentially, she defines this particular R family ritual observance negatively, that is, by what it does not involve. Although Alice does not know of what the R family's Christmas observance consisted, she knows that it did not include a tree. Nevertheless, this infers that she knows what the original tradition was. By Alice's time as a child, the youngsters were no longer encouraged to search for the first star of Christmas Eve, according to Alice. Alice's elder, Vera concurs, for in her narrative about Christmas, Vera says she has no recollection of looking for the first star of Christmas Eve.

Instead Alice remembers traveling from homestead to homestead caroling with the church group. This would have been a later development in the Soda Lake community's celebration of Christmas. In the R family's early days, the boys, carrying a home-made star-shaped lantern, would carol from house to house Christmas Evening, feasting on sweets and, more importantly, collecting coins to hold a party or a dance later on, but distances and cold mitigated against this traditional (Ukrainian) village custom in the Soda Lake area.[8] During Alice's youth, young people were mobilized to gather small monies to benefit church (youth) programs and doubtless to simply knit the community together.

Personal Narrative: Alice (Calendar Ritual: Christmas) #2

Alice returns to the subject of Christmas observance, speaking of the food that her mother would have prepared for Christmas Eve. Although uncertain about the particulars, Alice is quite certain that her mother would have prepared the "requisite number" of dishes.[9]

> 21 March 1997, tape index (#455-)—Christmas
> AR: And, of course, I don't remember going to church at Christmastime…I don't think that they had any kind of services, or if they did, I don't remember. Because in the winter time...
>
> *MJ: It [Christmas] was more of a home[-based holiday]…your mother would have made eleven or twelve ritual dishes.*
>
> AR: Oh, yes. We did. We had the requisite number. I can't remember. Twelve sounds more like…Yes, we had those and that included beets and the wheat.
>
> *MJ: Kutia? Like a barley-, like a grain-millet thing that gets mixed with honey?*
>
> AR: That could have been. I think we put honey in our wheat.
>
> *MJ: Did your father offer a blessing at the table?*
>
> AR: He must have, but I don't remember. When we came back…I don't recall. I just know that there were times when we came back [from church] that we were tired and sleepy and hungry and cold. So I don't remember that.

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Recalling that there were twelve dishes prepared for Christmas, Alice hones in on the beets and the *kutia*, without actually naming the *kutia*, beyond reporting that honey was mixed into it. She does not pause to attach any particular significance to the *kutia*, and thus, perhaps she was not made aware of the ritual importance of this dish. Ultimately, there is some confusion in her narrative, for Alice seems to be combining memories of Christmas and of Easter. For Christmas Eve, the R family would have remained at home together, enjoying the breaking of their fast with the twelve ritual meatless dishes. For Easter the family would have traveled to church for the blessing of the food in their basket.

Personal Narrative: Alice (Calendar Ritual: Christmas) #3

Six years after her earlier narratives about Christmas, Alice returns to her thoughts of the organized caroling that she did, but she defers to the presumed recollections of her older sister for details of Christmas at home. There is a kind of uncertainty and a desire to be done with it that emerges from Alice's narrative. The sense is that others can tell the story better than she. Furthermore, Alice remembers what Katherine remembers, better than what she, herself remembers. In some ways, Alice's memories are constructed by Katherine.

> 25 January 2003, pg. 2-3]—Christmas
> AR: Christmas didn't stand out that much, 'cause ah… we did go caroling from house to house. And I was with a group, I don't know…
>
> *MJ: And was "we" just the children in the family?*
>
> AR: Oh, no, in the whole community. There were certain people from the community, we went traveling, caroling from house to house. And I remember there were times, and I don't remember whether it was once or twice, where in the caroling, when we got somewhere and it was late, we spent the night at that place. We slept on the floor. And then went on and came home the next day. It's hazy to me how it happened. But I remember this: that we did stay overnight. We were always greeted well….But for Christmas at home, I don't remember that much. I bet Katherine would remember more about the home.
>
> *MJ: But you remember things like, for instance, looking for the first star…outside at night? Or…*
>
> AR: No.
>
> *MJ: Do you remember, say, bringing in hay to the house?*

> AR: Not when I was young. Katherine remembers that. But I didn't. In fact we had, at my age, we had a Christmas tree that was not that well decorated, because we didn't have any…but we had that.
>
> *MJ: Do you remember if your mother fixed kutia? And then your father threw it at the ceiling?*
>
> AR: I don't know what the significance would have been.
>
> *MJ: It had to do with fortune telling, but it was usually around Christmastime. You know foretelling what the next year would hold.*
>
> AR: I don't remember anything like that. I don't think mother and father were superstitious.

#####

Perhaps Katherine has suggested to Alice that earlier times in the R family were better times. For Alice realizes that a number of ritual gestures that were actively part of the family's Christmas observance— looking for the first star, bringing hay into the house, ritual blessings and gestures around the consumption of *kutia*—are not a part of her fund of memories. The Christmas tree that Alice remembers is, in retrospect, an object of some impoverishment: Alice says, "[the tree] was not that well decorated."

The *kutia*, which was, at one time, part of the R family's Christmas ritual—for earlier Alice has noted that her mother put honey in the *kutia* when she cooked it—seems to draw a blank from Alice. She wonders what the significance of tossing it to the ceiling would be and discounts the prophetic property of the ritual act. For Alice, her parents would do nothing of the sort for, she says, "I don't think mother and father were superstitious." Thus, Alice introduces the theme shared by her sisters, most notably Nancy and Vera: the Rs were not superstitious. They were a forward-thinking, forward-looking, modern Canadian family. If the R family ate *kutia* on Christmas Eve, for Alice, the family had successfully separated the dish from its ritual function and meaning and merely ate the *kutia* because it was customary to do so.

Personal Narrative: Alice (Calendar Ritual: *Iordan*)

The topic of the R family's non-religious, non-superstitious nature is brought up again in Alice's narrative response to the possible observance of *Iordan*. Perhaps by the time of Alice's youth, the family no longer enacted the *Iordan* rituals, or perhaps Alice simply did not remember what the family did or did not do for this calendar celebration. Certainly, the Soda Lake community battle regarding an appropriate priest for St. Demitrius, the pioneer church, did not make attending a *Iordan* service easy for the Rs during the time of Alice's youth. According to others in the family, for a time the Rs did take water to the church to be blessed for *Iordan*. This water was brought home and used frugally, but in accord with its intended function, that is, ritually appropriately.

> 25 January 2003, pg. 3—*Iordan*
> *MJ: What about Iordan, which is the blessing of the waters? This is a religious holiday that follows fairly fast on after Christmas, because it's around January 19th. And this is where people take water to the church and the priest blesses it and they bring that water home. And that's Holy Water. And then it's used medicinally. Do you remember this?*
>
> AR: No, I don't remember anything like that. And that may not have been one of the practices where we were, because again we didn't have a minister who was there all of the time. So, I don't remember that at all. I don't think that mother…mother [and father] were not religious.

#####

What is of interest here is not whether the R family observed *Iordan* in Alice's recollection or did so at an earlier time and ceased to do so later, but that Alice's association with Ukrainian-Canadian ritual observance, for example, *Iordan* , impels her to proffer that her parents "were not religious." Thus, Alice joins the chorus of her sisters who say essentially the same thing in their narratives.

Personal Narrative: Alice (Calendar Ritual: Easter) #1

For Easter, Alice notes that the family did indeed partake in some ritual activity, for example, the creation of simple *pysanky*. Because her mother knew how to make the

Easter eggs, she did so, according to Alice. However, what the significance of the *pysanky* might be, their symbolic nature and meaning in relation to Easter, does not enter into her narrative.

> 21 March 1997, tape index (#309-)—Easter
> AR: At Easter time we followed the traditional…making of…
>
> *MJ: Did you make Easter eggs?*
>
> AR: Mother did. Yes, she did….She made eggs like this. She made some of these [Alice points to a bowl of intricately decorated *pysanky* that she has on her coffee table.], but not as fine. Oh, yes. She did that…and the preparation…
>
> *MJ: Did any of you learn how to do this…did she teach any of you…? Or she just quickly did it herself?*
>
> AR: There wasn't time to teach. And she may have felt that we're not going to need it…I'm just guessing. But there wasn't time for teaching.
>
> *MJ: So it wasn't important to her that you carried on any particular tradition.*
>
> AR: I wouldn't say it wasn't important. I just said I don't think… it didn't enter her head. She did those things because she knew how to do them….

#####

As Alice talks about Easter, she faces a delicate bowl filled with beautiful *pysanky*, souvenirs from her various trips to western Canada. The bowl is in the center of the coffee table in her living room. One could infer from this that Alice appreciates this colorful vestige of her Ukrainian-Canadian past. The *pysanky* are a feature in Alice's living room and not seasonally introduced for, say, Easter or spring. She admires them year-round.

Somewhat uniquely, Alice's narrative touches upon what could be termed "a mother's editing." When it came to Maria's teaching her daughters aspects of her ritual heritage, for example, *pysanky*-writing, Alice observes, "there wasn't time to teach. And she [Maria] may have felt that we're not going to need it…." For Alice, if Maria felt that a particular skill or a body of knowledge would not aid her daughters in their drive towards excellence and success, then she did not attempt to pass it on to them. In other words and in Alice's mind, Maria "edited" what she wanted to teach her daughters. She had little time to teach them what she knew, certainly regarding their shared heritage, and deeply wanted them to carry away what was useful. Thus, Alice theorizes, the reason behind Maria's passing on certain things and not passing on others, for example, *pysanky*-writing, has to do with conscious decisions on Maria's part. The weight of work on the homestead is also a factor here. In the R family, Alice implies, there was little time for non-work activities, such as the teaching of Easter egg-writing.

Alice's mother engaged in ritual activities such as egg-writing: it was something she knew. Alice seems to echo this when she says that [Maria], "she did those things because she knew how to do them." All denials in the R family to the side, egg-writing connected Maria to Easter ritual observance. It would seem that because Alice was not brought inside of the ritual activity, that is, its deeper meaning was never communicated to her, she did not understand that egg-decorating was a ritual part, an integral part of the Easter observance. For Alice, it was about making-pretty for the calendar celebration, something her mother could teach, but chose to dismiss as time-consuming, useless or unnecessary knowledge for the future.

By way of denial, it would seem that Alice reveals that her mother is religious in a sense, even "superstitious" in the manner that the Rs use this word. Maria continues to inscribe eggs for Easter, even after her daughters have passed beyond learning this ritual activity. The R sisters consistently deny religious-superstitious belief. They repeatedly insist otherwise. What does this say about what the family identifies with? There is a contradiction between observed behavior, for example, Maria's low-intensity religiosity/superstition, and self-described behavior, that is, "we were not superstitious."

Personal Narrative: Alice (Calendar Ritual: Easter) #2

In a somewhat grey narrative about Easter, Alice focuses on waiting for the priest, the unpredictability of his time of arrival, the bad roads, the miserable weather. Ultimately, she mentions the reason for the drawn out discomfort, the blessing of the Easter eggs and Easter bread, which then freed the family to return home and to finally eat. It could be said at this point that Alice's memories of Easter are neither expansive nor pleasurable. As a young person not particularly connected to what is going on, she is simply being dragged along by those more involved with the ritual activity. From Alice's perspective, for Easter the R family went through the motions of having their Easter food blessed: they came home and they ate.

> 21 March 1997, tape index #420-)—Easter
> AR: We went to Easter service [at church] whenever it was. Sometimes it was evening, sometimes midnight, sometimes morning. [She laughs]
>
> *MJ: Oh really. Why…?*
>
> AR: Well, because the priest had to make several stops. You know he didn't have one church. He went to several. So it depended on when he came, it would be evening or morning, but we didn't know exactly when. The roads were bad and many times they were bad because it would melt and freeze.
>
> *MJ: Would he be driving or would he have a buggy or…?*
>
> AR: Sled, at that time. I don't even remember. I don't think he had a car.
>
> *MJ: How would you know he was there yet?*
>
> AR: Oh, you'd just go and wait. You didn't know when he'd be there. Sometimes he'd say, "well, I'll be there in the evening and I'll be at your church at 1:00 or 2:00 o'clock." If the roads were bad, it might be 3:00 or 4:00, but we all waited. We all waited. And we took the Easter eggs and the Easter bread and ah…we took the food to be blessed and we came home and we ate. That's what we ate, the basket of blessed food.

#####

Alice stresses the fact that she, her family, the other parishioners "all waited." The sense is that it never occurred to them not to wait. There is a kind of incredulity in Alice's narrative, that people, such as her family, would wait so patiently, under less than favorable conditions, for a priest to arrive to conduct a service and to bless their Easter baskets. Certainly the waiting could be attributed to social pressure: everybody came and everybody waited. That's simply what one did. But the waiting also hints at a respect for what is going to take place. The R family is indeed involved in the ritual activity of the Easter cycle. Perhaps Alice begins to realize this when she repeats the sentence in her narrative.

Personal Narrative: Alice (Calendar Ritual: Easter) #3

In her third narrative about Easter, taped six years after the two earlier narratives, Alice repeats some of the same details—going to the church and waiting, the unpredictable weather and road conditions. This is all indelibly part of her Easter memory. But here, Alice admits that Easter did mean something to her, it stood out as "the Ukrainian part" of her upbringing. She does not venture why this might be so.

> 25 January 2003, pg. 2—Easter
> *MJ: Well, just tell me a little bit about some of the things that you remember in particular about, when you were young, about, in a way, about the Ukrainian part of your upbringing. Are there holidays that you remember in a particular way? You participated in something?…*
>
> AR: Well Easter was one holiday…
>
> *MJ: But do you remember…what would YOU have done at Easter: Alice.*
>
> AR: Me?
>
> *MJ: Yeah.*
>
> AR: Well, I suppose helped in the kitchen to prepare the food for Easter.
>
> *MJ: What would you have done? How would you have [helped]? …*
>
> AR: I don't remember any of those details.
>
> *MJ: Did you help in the kitchen?*
>
> AR: Yes, but mother did the bulk of the cooking. And mother did the Easter eggs. We didn't learn how to do the Easter eggs. And then, of course, we all went to church. And Easter Sunday, services were never at a specified time. Because we didn't have a minister assigned to the church. He had several churches and he had to travel. Yeah. So there were times when we went to…and weather was very unpredictable then. We didn't know what the roads would be like. We didn't

> travel by car then. And sometimes we went to church at midnight and didn't get home until six o'clock in the morning, because it was so…the minister couldn't get there when he was supposed to.
>
> And then we went home and the blessed food tasted so good. [She laughs] 'Cause we were hungry by then because we were fasting. So that was one holiday that stood out.

#####

Alice explains that the family genuinely enjoyed the food in its Easter basket because they had been fasting and were hungry. That the R family was fasting is another indication that at the time, they were following the dictates of ritual observance for Easter.

Personal Narrative: Alice (Calendar Ritual: *Zeleni Sviata*)

When asked about the calendar ritual that follows Easter, fifty days after Easter, Alice draws a blank. Her elder sisters have some recollection of *Zeleni Sviata*, but Alice does not. That Vera, who is three years Alice's senior, remembers *Zeleni Sviata* would seem to indicate that even in Alice's youth—which was essentially Vera's youth—Whitsuntide or Pentecost was marked by the R family, yet for the younger children, these were simply not significant events.

> 21 March 1997, tape index (#405-)—Green Holidays, Whitsuntide, *Zeleni Sviata*
> *MJ: What about "Green Festival" and it was after Easter. It was called Zeleni Sviata? Like celebrating Spring. You would clean house and put up greens around the house to celebrate…*
>
> AR: Not then. But I remember the name, *zeleni* is green and *sviata* is holiday…I don't remember that at all.

#####

Instead of recalling *Zeleni Sviata* or any ritual gestures that the R family might have enacted around this calendar observance, Alice can only proffer simple vocabulary recognition. In the decades of our relationship, Alice has rarely spoken Ukrainian or referred to anything using Ukrainian terminology. She has lived long and far away from her birth culture in every way conceivable. It is notable that, in spite of non-existent memories, Alice recalls the words, their meaning, around a calendar ritual. She knows the terms exactly, "green" and "holiday." The words are not enough to capture the thing as a whole, but enough for a moment of recognition.

Concluding remarks on Alice's personal narratives

Alice's narratives are spare, even silent about the wealth of activity that must have occurred around rites of passage and calendar ritual celebrations in the R family. Throughout, Alice seems more removed from events than her sisters. For Alice, Ukrainian-Canadian weddings and funerals were cut from the same cloth: "the neighborhood came and cooked." There is neither joy, nor sadness in her recollections of these rite of passage events, simply the voice of a disengaged observer. Alice was surrounded by the large family she grew up in and by a sizeable community of Ukrainian-Canadian immigrants who had much in common with her own parents and the R family. However, these communities do not figure prominently in Alice's narratives, and thus, one is left to conclude that, from Alice's perspective, which seems to be in line with that of her sisters, the R family was conservative when it came to social intercourse.

It is clear from Alice's personal narratives, however that the R family enacted Ukrainian-Canadian rite of passage and calendar rituals. They continued to carry their *paska* basket to church to be blessed at the Easter service and to dine on twelve ritual meatless dishes on Christmas Eve in the days of Alice's adolescence. But from Alice, there is no sense of a family's reaffirmation of its bonds through this ritual observance. For her, the ritual gestures seem to be empty. The sisters agree on this and thus—in negative—they create bonds. The bond-formation takes place, but in opposition to the "intention" of ritual observance. In Alice's mind, she is left to watch a family going through the motions of ritual performance. *Kutia* is simply one of many dishes served for Christmas Eve and *pysanky* writing at Easter is a craft that her mother enjoys doing but for reasons about which we can only speculate, has decided not to impart to her daughters.

In Alice's narratives, calendar rituals observed in whatever fragmentary manner the family has chosen, are an opportunity to reiterate that the R family is not religious and certainly not "superstitious." Nevertheless, she is quick to leap to the family's defense when a question of ritual propriety comes up, for example, stating that "We had the requisite number" of Christmas Eve foods.

Alice's blurring of calendar rituals, such as Christmas and Easter, would seem to point to her having never been brought inside the symbolic and meaning-laden systems of these specific and separate events. For Alice, Christmas and Easter are all of once piece, as are weddings and funerals. Nor does the observation of Ukrainian-Canadian ritual, at home or at church, seem to bring joy for Alice. Instead, ritual celebration is characterized by a habitual colorlessness: "I just know that there were times when we came back [from church] that we were tired and sleepy and hungry and cold," Alice says, in all likelihood speaking of Easter.

What stands out ultimately is a refracted view of a family that was over-extended and somewhat isolated from the rest of the Ukrainian-Canadian community around them. Alice indicates a tendency for the R children to create subsets of the family as a locus of support, for example, Alice and Katherine form a subset. After all, subsets were a traditional way of "delegating" responsibility within large, overworked families. This was undoubtedly true for all immigrant families of a certain size. R family identity seems very much dependent upon close sibling communication in small groups.

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[1] According to its founder, Sue Ellen Cooper, "The Red Hat Society began as a result of a few women deciding to greet middle age with verve, humor and elan. We believe silliness is the comedy relief of life and, since we are all in it together, we might as well join red-gloved hands and go for the gusto together. Underneath the frivolity, we share a bond of affection, forged by common life experiences and a genuine enthusiasm for wherever life takes us next" (Cooper 2004: www.redhatsociety.com). The ladies of The Red Hat Society boldly wear bright red hats and mix purple and red in their costumes when they gather.

[2] Here, Vera recounts her version of the unwanted or rejected child theme in the R family.
Vera: But I'm sure I told you about Father. I guess she [mother] got pregnant...this was quite a bit earlier...and Father said, why don't we go to Vegreville and ask that young doctor to [perform an abortion]. There was this young doctor and then there was Dr. Reed, who had been there [for some time]. I guess in desperation, mother went with Father...to the young doctor...and she said that he gave her Hell! The doctor said to her, "Your husband is trying to kill you!" He wasn't at all sympathetic. He told her to just forget it. I don't know whether she screwed up her courage or Father took her to Dr. Reed, but she went to Dr. Reed. "Dr. Reed was very kind," she [mother] said. He told her it was a very dangerous procedure. It was better to have one more than to orphan all of the family. And she had another baby.

MJ: Which baby was this?

Vera: I don't know. It could have been me! I don't know. I know that Sam says that when they found out that she was pregnant with me, they [the older children—Al, Sam, Bill, Nancy, Katherine] were grumbling and complaining: "No more babies! You promised no more babies." When I was born, because I was born at home, mother said, "Well, do you want to keep her? Or should I get rid of her?" They looked at the little baby—it was cute. That's the way it went.
Interview with Vera R. 25 March 1995. Berkeley, CA. Tape 2, p. 4-5.

[3] The years of 1918 and 1919 brought repeated blows to Maria and to the R family. Alex R summarizes part of the situation.
"On July 24, 1918, the earliest fall frost in recorded history, ranging from 20 to 29 degrees Fahrenheit, devastated crops in the North Saskatchewan River Basin. A low of 23 was registered in Vegreville. Since wheat was reaching the vulnerable milk state, the crop was completely destroyed. We had planted 55 acres of wheat on newly broken soil that promised a bumper yield. The loss of this and the other crops shattered father and mother. Virtually a whole year's work had gone down the drain. Loss of the income that would have made other projects and improvements possible as well as resulting in a better standard of living, was a serious blow. But the greatest shock was to have the disaster strike so suddenly without warning….Low moisture conditions, approaching drought, affected the district the next year or two, adding to our distress. Farmers ran short of feed, cereals, hay, straw…for their stock. Feed was not available for purchase except by shipment from distant points at exorbitant prices. Cattle starved…." (Alex R., 2002: 54-55).

Alex's younger brother Sam speaks of this difficult time as well.
"It was hard for me to go to sleep, hearing the cattle moaning for food and knowing that when we went out early in the morning, we would find some of them dead from cold and hunger. Other cattle would lay down or fall down from weakness and would be unable to get up. I would have to take the shotgun and kill the poor creatures" (Sam R., 1982: 39-40).

Then on October 31st of 1918, Maria's brother Gus died, a result of the Spanish influenza, which affected the entire community. In 1919, she lost her brother Bill to typhoid fever. Alice was born on the 24th of May in 1919 and on that day, Maria's father-in-law, Wasyl R died. Although Maria was reputedly not close to Wasyl, the R family did attend his funeral. Perhaps Maria was not present at the funeral, since she had just given birth to Alice. Nevertheless, regardless of the R family feelings for Wasyl R, his death would have been a point for fresh grief, given all the recent grief in their lives.

[4] Nancy was married on July 14th, 1926. This has been stated elsewhere.

[5] Katherine describes the dress she made and wore for Nancy's wedding in an interview with me.
KR: We had so little to be creative with. We had to dream about it. When Nancy got married, we went to Edmonton, bought her a white dress and all that. Oh, but before that, when I'd been at the Ukrainian Institute in Edmonton, one of the older students, ah, bought a, she'd bought a few clothes. But she'd bought a nice, what we called a Georgette, it was probably silk crepe, thin, had its own slip. And it was kind of like a peach color. And on the skirt, all around, it had a rather delicate, not the least bit gaudy or anything, flowers. And I just loved that dress. But there was no way I could get that dress. So later on, when Nancy got married, I went and found some, bought some fabric that I thought was more or less like the dress. I made the dress. But I wanted the flowers. And I took ordinary crayons and I made the flowers of [with] different colored crayons
MJ: Drew on the fabric? Is that what you did?
KR: Yes. Yes. All around. And then I took an iron and "set" it. The crayons melted, you know. And I remember making a green slip to go under it. "Cause you had to have a special slip, because it was transparent. But as I say, we didn't have much to be creative about.
Interview with Katherine R, 31 August 2000, Walnut Creek, CA, Tape 2, #61-85.

[6] I have repeated a portion of Alice's narrative for the introduction of her next narrative, "Father's death," for in our actual talk together, Alice slides seamlessly from the topic of Nancy's wedding to her father's death.

[7] Alice's elder sister Nancy offers a somewhat fuller picture of funerary ritual around the death of their father. Nancy reports that when her father died, her mother observed the 40-days-after-death ritual dinner for John R. Nancy says, "…When my father died, my mother did that [40-days after]. …It was my duty to be there. And I did the baking, cakes

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for Mother. The neighbors, the Ls, set the tables outside…She invited, I guess, all of the neighbors. They all came and had a drink and [came] to the service. It was quite nice. Good food."
Interview with Nancy, Edmonton, AB, 26 May 1995, tape #1, #339.

The point is important if only to underscore the fact that those in the R family who were still living at home and able to attend, probably were participants in a Ukrainian-Canadian funeral in 1938.

[8] Elder brother Bill speaks about making a star and caroling for Christmas.

MJ: Katherine mentioned that you boys knew how to make the wax lanterns that would be carried about at Christmas for caroling. Is that so?

Bill: Well, this is not a big thing. It's just wax and paper and candles. We had no form, we just used colored paper. It was Alec, Sam and I; we went with the neighbor boys, the Ls. We'd trudge in the middle of the night's snow. It was two feet deep. And we'd come to a house and carol under the windows. And they'd come out, God blessing us, and toss us five cents. Well the idea was to raise money, of course. Money, for us, we'd have a dance. At some houses we were welcome, at others, they'd tolerate us. After Christmas, there was a dance.
Interview with Bill R, Surrey, B.C., 15 July 1994, Tape 3, pg. 1.

Elder brother Sam also describes caroling for Christmas.
"About dusk, we boys would dress warmly and start out on an evening of caroling, but the girls and smaller children were not permitted to go out in this severe winter weather….We started out walking to the home of the neighbors on the south, singing Ukrainian carols in front of their living room window. The father would welcome us into the house, where we sang several more carols. The mother would serve us holiday treats and the father occasionally gave us a jigger of home-made whiskey to warm us up, and a coin or two to put in our pockets. Then his sons would join us and we would go on to the next house.

We carried a paper star we had made, with a candle inside. We would light the candle when we came to a house. As we progressed, we would meet other carolers; some of them would join us, some of our group would leave, so we didn't always end up with the same boys we had started out with.

The snow would be deep, drifted high in some places, shallow in others. We did not follow the road from house to house; we would cut across the fields. If the snow was crusted, we would try to see if we could walk lightly over the crust without breaking it. We kept going until midnight and would return home at one o'clock, tired and ready for a bite to eat and a warm bed. Before we went to sleep, we counted our nickels and dimes over again, although we had carefully kept track of exactly how much money we had acquired" (Sam R., 1982: 36-37).

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[9] The *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged* definition of "requisite" is "required by the nature of things, of circumstances; necessary" (1961: 1929).

Anne

Note About Anne

Anne was the last R sister whom I interviewed. She is the third eldest girl in the R family, two years younger than Katherine. Like most of her siblings, she graduated from Hairy Hill High School, but unlike most of her sisters, she had the unique opportunity of one year of college at the University of Alberta which enabled her to entertain the prospect of a career. She began by teaching school. But in Alberta in the early 1930s, the local school board had problems with Slavic surnames.[1] They preferred not to hire qualified teachers with these surnames. Knowing that she'd not be hired if her surname sounded Ukrainian, Anne performed a sleight-of-hand. She changed several letters of the name to give it an Anglo-sounding lilt. For a time, the ruse worked. But shortly, Anne was caught in her alphabet bending and asked to leave her teaching post, which she did at the end of the term. Since her elder sister Katherine needed help in Cleveland, Anne chose to leave Canada and join her there. Ultimately, she found work as an executive secretary in the Cleveland corporate headquarters for the Erie-Lackawanna Railroad where she remained until her retirement. Anne never married.

Although life-threatening illnesses posed danger to several of the R children, Anne bears the distinction of having come the closest to dramatic death as a child. As a mere toddler, probably about four years old, Anne accidentally drank formaldehyde. Her father had been soaking wheat seeds in it in preparation for planting.[2] Curious, or perhaps attracted by the sweet odor, Anne quaffed some part of the substance and almost immediately slipped into shock. Fortunately, because Maria, her mother, was acting Soda Lake postmistress,[3] there was a telephone in the home. And further, Maria had the presence of mind to call across the road for "old Mrs. B" who had been a nurse. And fortunately, the elderly nurse was home and counseled sour milk being immediately forced down Anne's throat.[4] The emetic worked; the child survived. When speaking to me, Anne recalled the event as if it were a dream.[5] But her esophagus and stomach lining had nevertheless been damaged and the family always suspected that the incident stunted Anne's physical growth.

Like her younger sister Alice, Anne does not seem to derive much pleasure from talking about her early years at Soda Lake. Her older sisters, Nancy and Katherine, have vivid—if not always pleasant—recollections of Soda Lake, but Anne's narratives show that what she has not forgotten, she is trying to forget. When I asked Anne whether she had any memories of births, marriages or deaths while growing up at Soda Lake, she answered in the negative.

In some things, Anne has remained close to her farm roots. In conversation before and after our formal interviews, Anne described her offering for her church's recent fund-raiser. At the annual event, material goods and services are "auctioned" to the highest bidder. Whereas others baked pies or contributed watercolors or hand thrown pottery, Anne offered four hours of weed-pulling, broken up into two-hour segments. She admitted that she genuinely liked to pull weeds. Of course, at the time, I speculated that she was harkening back to her younger days at Soda Lake, working in her mother's garden. She did not disagree.[6]

Anne's present day tenth-floor high rise apartment in Cleveland is sparsely furnished, and in January, when I interviewed her, I found it to be wildly overheated. Anne does not like to be cold and warns against the moaning winds of Lake Erie, comparing them to the moaning winds of eastern Alberta. Her apartment changes in Cleveland have taught her not to collect large pieces of furniture. Nor does she acquire knick-knacks. Her apartment's decoration consists of a scattering of art posters—Gauguin and Monet—mounted on a great expanse of white wall. Nevertheless, there, in a bowl on a sideboard, is a cluster of lovely *pysanky*.

When a youth, Anne was sent to school in Vegreville. She was recognized to be a bright girl and perhaps her parents wanted to favor her in this way, for she had been a sickly child after the formaldehyde incident. Anne's siblings, with the exception of Alex who was also sent to Vegreville, completed their high school courses in Hairy Hill, a smaller town, closer to the R family homestead. While in Vegreville, Anne was a member of a Ukrainian-Canadian dance troupe. A photo shows the troupe decoratively arranged along the bed of a flat-bed truck. This document exists in a book about the history of Ukrainian-Canadians in Vegreville.[7] Anne and her dance mates, seated and standing, are resplendent in their richly embroidered and doubtless colorful—the image is black and white—ensembles. Yet, although Anne recalled having been in the dance group, she preferred not to speak of her dancing experience.

Personal Narrative: Anne (Ritual: Miscellaneous)

Anne comes alive over discussions of food. She possesses an exuberance that encompasses a love of flavors and scents. She likes to cook for company, although not for herself, and, in her opinion, is noted for her pot roast, her macaroni and cheese, and her lemon meringue pie. Anne did, for a time, carry on a tradition of preparing *holubtsi* and *nachynka* common in her childhood and common in the kitchens of her sisters, Nancy and Vera. Suffice it to say that I tried to use the topic of food as a way to encourage Anne to talk about her life at Soda Lake.

In the following narrative, Anne's reminiscing about the sauerkraut her mother cyclically prepared, leads her to an insight about a local *khram*.

> 14 January 2003, pg. 2—*Khram* and *Holubtsi*
> AR: In the Fall, she [mother] would take a cabbage head. Remember, she would make sauerkraut in a big, big barrel and she'd put some cabbage heads in there. And she'd take them out…and they would sour like sauerkraut. And that's the kind [of cabbage leaves for *holubtsi*] I like best. So when I made them [*holubtsi*], when I did it, I'd buy sauerkraut juice. That's what I prefer, I'd prefer, I'd love it. Yeah. Oh! I was going to say that whenever there was *khram*, or anything like that, there were, that [*holubtsi*] was a standard dish that you had.
>
> *MJ: And was it [were the holubtsi prepared with] primarily cabbage leaves with rice or were there other things in them?*
>
> AR: I have no idea, except rice, and not meat. I'm pretty sure there was [no meat]….One thing, when you made them in Summer, you just had heat. You

> didn't have refrigeration there [at Soda Lake]....Oh yes, that was a standard dish. Everyone had it.
>
> #####

Although Anne is excellent on the details, she had very little to say about what a *khram* is or how or why a *khram* is observed, or whether she had ever attended various *khrams*. Anne is quick to note that, for *khram*, *holubtsi* are always prepared and served. In her mind, the food seems akin to a ritual rule. If there is *khram*, then there must be *holubtsi*. Her pleasure in the flavor of the soured cabbage leaves is apparent. Her word-picture of where, when and how her mother would prepare the sour cabbage is also pointed: the cabbage heads are picked and trimmed in the fall and placed in a "big, big barrel."

Personal Narrative: Anne (Calendar Ritual: Christmas) #1

Anne's associations are idiosyncratic. Perhaps because the most pleasurable aspects of her youth seem to relate to food, she connects hemp oil to the observance of Christmas (and Easter). Without incorporating into her narrative what she perceived the R family to be doing to prepare for and to celebrate Christmas, Anne is aware of ritual proscriptions. Hemp oil must be used in cooking and not butter.

> 14 January 2003, pg. 2—Christmas and Hemp Oil
> Yes. Hemp....Oh, at Christmas. At Christmas or Easter, I think Christmas, we'd take the hemp to some man who had a mill and he'd make hemp oil. And we'd use [hemp], instead of butter at Christmas. We weren't supposed to use butter at Christmas.
>
> #####

Anne's observations here give us a glimpse of how rituals influenced family behavior. She underscores the fact that the family did, indeed, take extra steps to observe certain calendar rituals in a manner it considered appropriate.

Personal Narrative: Anne (Calendar Ritual: Christmas) #2

In another narrative regarding Christmas and its observance, Anne returns to what was pleasurable for her, the flavorful dishes among the twelve ritual dishes that her mother prepared for Christmas Eve. She speaks with precision about what was ritualistically correct. "Nothing that came from a warm-blooded animal," she says. And by way of example, she mentions that fish could be eaten, and were.

> 14 January 2003, pg. 9—Christmas and Ritual food
> *MJ: Did she fix the twelve meatless dishes on Christmas Eve?*
>
> AR: Yes. Nothing that came from a warm-blooded animal. We'd have fish.
>
> *MJ: Would you have kutia? It's like a porridge. You'd start the meal. It's wheat cooked with honey...*
>
> AR: Oh, wheat. The poppy seeds...Yeah, mother would cook that. It took all day long to cook the wheat.
>
> *MJ: Do you remember, if your father threw any at the ceiling?*
>
> AR: Oh, that was a custom?...We didn't do. I don't recall it.
>
> *MJ: You just ate it.*
>
> AR: One of the things mother did was, she would collect mushrooms and dry them. Dried mushrooms. And she'd have beets, cooked beets, very...she'd cut them very...there is a word for it...fine. Anyway, she'd make that with the dried mushrooms. I liked that dish.

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There is no uncertainty in Anne's tone about her mother's having prepared exactly twelve meatless dishes. And she remembers not only that there was *kutia* for the meal, but how it was prepared and the challenges involved in cooking it. "It took all day long to cook the wheat," she says. She does not refer to *kutia* by its Ukrainian term, so it is possible that this usage has fallen away for her. Nor does she attach any particular ritual importance to the dish. It is simply one of twelve dishes prepared and served for Christmas Eve, no more or less important than any of the other dishes.

Anne seems amused that tossing *kutia* to the ceiling, an important ritual gesture in the Christmas cannon, would be a custom. She certainly does not recall it as part of the R family's Christmas observance. Instead, she moves on to mention beets and dried mushrooms, for she enjoyed the flavor of the dish her mother prepared them in. It would seem also that Anne was a kitchen observer, for she knows her mother's techniques for preparing and cooking various foods.

Personal Narrative: Anne (Calendar Ritual: Christmas) #3

When asked whether she recalls herself or her siblings searching expectantly for the first star of Christmas Eve, Anne replies in the negative. "I never heard that," she says. Yet Anne's sister Nancy, who is four years older than Anne, remembers with fondness looking for the evening's first star so that the Christmas Eve dinner could commence.[8] It is possible that by the time Anne was old enough to understand what was happening, the R family had ceased to follow this tradition, or that the tradition continued for some time but for Anne, it simply did not register.

> 14 January 2003, pg. 10—First Star
> *MJ:...For Christmas, did someone go outside and look for the first star?*
>
> AR: I don't remember....Is that something that your people did?
>
> *MJ: Well, it was a Ukrainian tradition where the children would go out and wait for the first star to come up and then you could eat.*
>
> AR: Oh, I never heard that!

#####

What is striking in Anne's preceding narrative is the manner in which Anne defines herself and the R family through denial, that is, by denying known R family tradition. Anne's protestation that she does not remember, sounds an off-key chord. Her two elder sisters—of these, Katherine is a mere two years older than Anne—remember looking for the first star. Anne was certainly present for this activity. It may be that she honestly cannot remember, or it may be that she has simply chosen not to talk about this particular ritual gesture. She goes on to propose an unexpected dichotomy: "Is that something that *your people* did?" [my italics] she says. In other words the inference is, "was that a tradition with 'your' people, because it was not a tradition with 'my' people?" But *my* people and *her* people are exactly the same people, the R family; Anne was my mother's elder sister, four years her senior. This unusual statement conveys a kind of disconnect that Anne expresses with regard to the heritage of the R family, at least in my presence.[9]

One can infer that Anne retains a certain sense of unease and vulnerability around R family identity, insofar as it reflects Ukrainianness. Why admit a Ukrainian-Canadian heritage, if it brings up buried bruises? Why not "forget" the painful parts of being a minority Ukrainian-Canadian and be someone else? In Anne's narratives, she never mentions her run-in with the school board in Alberta, but others of her siblings did mention Anne's experience in my interviews with them.[10] This incident provides a clue to Anne's selective memory about all things Ukrainian-Canadian and Ukrainian-related in her family. For Anne, if being Ukrainian-Canadian meant you were "unfit" to teach, why recall dancing happily in Ukrainian costume as a bright, lovely child or celebrating Christmas by searching joyfully for the first star of the evening, or marking *Iordan*, Easter or *Zeleni Sviata*?

Recently, at my mother's funeral-memorial dinner, my ninety-four year old father and the eldest surviving member of the K family—Ukrainian-Canadians all—was asked what his ethnic origin was by a gentleman who possessed a vague aura of authority. The gentleman probably saw some of my mother's Ukrainian-Canadian mementos—a *poias*, some *pysanky*—displayed on the table. Without hesitation, my father replied that he was "European." Here was a breathtakingly fresh denial of heritage. To claim that he was European gave him stature in his mind. Of Ukraine, my father currently knows that it is a struggling country somewhere on the edge of Poland and Russia. In an apparent gamble on the inquiring gentleman's grasp of geography, my father tried to situate his ethnic ancestry further west. To identify with Ukraine would not have deflected possible censure as it would to claim European ancestry.

To return to Anne's narrative, she implies that for the R family, if a quaint, questionable, or undesirable "Old World" ritual—for example, *kutia* tossed to the ceiling on Christmas Eve—pigeonholes the family, it is a ritual activity that *others* enact, not the R family. Other Ukrainian-Canadians did toss *kutia* to the ceiling on Christmas Eve. These "others" were the ones who got the R family into their identity "fix"—for the Rs thought themselves lumped in with those who were "superstitious." That an unfamiliar custom, in this case, looking for the first star on Christmas Eve, should elicit such a response is singular. It points to the tendency of Anne and of the R family to isolate itself from others: there were "our" people and there were "your" people.

Similarly, it is striking how spare Anne's Christmas narratives are. She is, after all, privy to the R family ritual observances, which included Christmas, *Iordan*, Easter, *Zeleni Sviata* and *Ivana.* However, Anne is reluctant to delve too deeply to reconnect with her Ukrainian-Canadian heritage.

Personal Narrative: Anne (Calendar Ritual: *Iordan*)

In her brief narrative about blessed water, Anne states that she has never heard of the calendar ritual *Iordan.* She may have no memory of the ritual, but her family did, certainly in Nancy's and Katherine's time, observe *Iordan.* What is more puzzling is that not only did Anne's grandmother, Elena—who strongly believed in the effectiveness of holy water and used it demonstrably on the R children—live with the R family on two separate occasions, but Anne herself lived with Elena, when she was a child of approximately eight years of age. Surely, Anne would have been aware of Elena's use of holy water, and if not familiar with the substance or its employ, would have found it interesting or curious.

> 14 January 2003, pg. 10-11—Blessed water
> *MJ: Do you remember if your family celebrated Iordan? [MJ describes what Iordan is, mentions Holy water.]*
>
> AR: Oh, the River Jordan. No, never heard of it.
>
> *MJ: But your grandmother [Elena] kept Holy water.*
>
> AR: She did?
>
> *MJ: She used it medicinally.*

> AR: She did? A lot of good it did her.
>
> *MJ: I guess you didn't believe much in Holy water.*

#####

Whereas Anne's sisters note their grandmother's behavior on occasion, Anne seems not to be aware of her presence in the R family whatsoever. That her grandmother relied on the spiritual and medicinal merits of blessed water elicits a rather sardonic response from Anne: "A lot of good it did her," she says. But Elena set great store by such ritual aids and her belief in and use of *Iordan*-blessed water probably did her spirit some good. Anne has come a long way from the days when colorfully costumed, she danced choreographed "Ukrainian" folk dances for audiences in Vegreville, a fetching maiden promoting the spirit of Ukrainian-Canadian culture.[11] Thus, in Anne we see the outlines of the R family's rejection of the rituals that had been part of their identity and that had helped to bind them together as a group.

Personal Narrative: Anne (Calendar Ritual: Easter)

Like her younger sister Alice, Anne keeps a bowl of colorful *pysanky* in her living room. Although she is reluctant to do more than acknowledge the eggs as something she "likes," doubtless having them near must provide some connection to her R family identity and to her past. She is not immune to beauty and is quite aware of certain details from her youth, so it would not be untoward to assume that the *pysanky* do mean something to Anne beyond their existence as attractive objects. However, Anne herself does not go so far as to say this.

> 13 January 2003, pg. 4—Ukrainian Easter eggs [*Pysanky*]
> *MJ: Are there things you've tried to hold on to? I see over there some painted [pysanky] eggs.*
>
> AR: Yeah, I like those. Much better than the ones, the detailed ones…'cause you can see they're done by hand. And the others look like they'd been done by machine.

> *MJ: You mean the really, really intricate ones.*
>
> AR: I have one or two that look like they're done by a machine. I like the ones that are done by hand....four, five...[Anne counts the eggs she has in the bowl.]
>
> *MJ: Are they all real eggs or are some of them wooden?*
>
> AR: No, they're real eggs.
>
> *MJ: Now, you know, you can get wooden ones as well.*
>
> AR: Yeah. My neighbor...[unintelligible, talk about how long ago this was]...Petrushka was her name. We were neighbors. She was Russian. And she used to do those, like Fabergé. She used to do them, not as good as he, [for] he's exceptional.

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The extent of Anne's disconnect from her family's Ukrainian-Canadian heritage can be seen in her association of the *pysanky* in her living room with her Russian neighbor and with Fabergé. Although it is true that the creation of beautiful decorated eggs at Easter is a Russian tradition, as well as a Ukrainian tradition, the specific instances of the Romanov tsars giving jewel-encrusted Fabergé eggs to their wives at Easter has little to do with the R family and its Ukrainian-Canadian Easter *pysanky*. And by making a connection with the Russian royal family, Anne essentially adds a romantic touch to heritage and to her past. We consider this to be similar to my father's substituting European origins for his Galician roots.

Concluding remarks on Anne's personal narratives

Anne's narratives have a guarded quality to them. They are spare and reveal few details of the rich ritual heritage, which, for a time, bound the R family together. Yet Anne's narratives are unique among all of the narratives on both sides of this comparison in that her narratives are often linked to nourishment and the pleasurable smells and tastes of various special dishes. In the narratives, there are hints of her being connected to the family's ritual activity. The flavors of soured cabbage, *holubtsi* and hemp oil all are cause to recall Christmas ritual food or *khram*. However, other aspects of Christmas and other calendar celebrations for Anne, are defined in a sense, by negative space. Anne presents us with narratives of denial and essentially communicates a family identity that is formed through disavowing heritage. "Oh, that was a custom?...I don't recall it" and "I don't remember...Is that something that your people did?" are stock reactions to inquiries concerning Ukrainian-Canadian ritual observance.

Because she seems to remember so little, Anne infers that little existed to remember. Perhaps Anne was not aware of her grandmother's adherence to *Iordan*-blessed water as a medicinal and health aid, but living with the woman, watching her from day-to-day, makes this seem unlikely. Perhaps near-complete silence about Easter, its colorful and enjoyable aspects for the R children, would lead one to assume that there were none, but we know this not to be the case.[12]

Her apparent reluctance to speak of childhood experience is countermanded by her enthusiasm for childhood memories related to food. In this sense, for a child who nearly died from drinking poisonous formaldehyde, the food-related memories are the ones that inform her narratives.

Anne does not comment on the R family's non-religious nature, its non-superstitious character. Instead, she questions their very participation in Ukrainian-Canadian ritual observance. The ritual observances that she recalls are all keyed to the food that was prepared, brought by guests, served, and eaten. Anne's unique stance with regard to her family reflects the extent to which food—from planting, harvesting, preparing, and consuming—shows closeness in the family. Anne's narrative fragments reveal a mother who kept Anne close as she worked in the kitchen and captures significant glimpses of rituals the family observed where Anne was present, and perhaps specially fêted with nourishment and treats.

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[1] Author Zonia Keywan outlines a situation in which a 19-year old Ukrainian-Canadian school teacher is hired to teach near Bowmanville, Ontario. "Someone in the district took exception to Miss Kozak's foreign name and her parents' foreign background, and went out among the taxpayers collecting signatures to block her appointment." Her appointment was successfully blocked. Keywan goes on to note that "It is no wonder, then, that during the 1930s and 1940s, a sizeable number of Ukrainians anglicized their names…" (Keywan 1977: 158).

[2] "Father planned the planting and all of that, and she [Mother] certainly went along with it. In the Winter, there were two activities, screening the seed with a machine and formaldehyding it for protection from disease. And the other activity was repairing the harnesses, machinery and so forth."
Interview with Alex R. 19 April 1996, Golfview [West Palm Beach], Florida, p. 40.

[3] Collective family memory seems to point to Anne's being four or five years old at the time of the formaldehyde mishap. If this were so, the incident would have occurred in 1916 or 1917, while Maria, her mother, was acting Soda Lake postmistress.

Alex R writes of Maria and the post office. "The government extended the telephone line from Vegreville to Shandro, about 15 miles north of us, in 1906 or 1907, and made a connection to our home in 1911. We were the only Ukrainian family in the district with a phone and became the resource for neighbors who needed to make urgent calls, usually to Vegreville, to a doctor, or for critically needed repairs for equipment. By virtue of the post office and the phone, we became a kind of central intelligence center."
(Alex R. 2002: 40).
[Alex neglects to note that the reason that the phone was installed in the R household, was precisely because it was the community's post office.]

[4] Anne's older brother, Bill, writes of this incident in his unpublished manuscript. "One spring, Mother was treating grain with formaldehyde for seeding the next day. Anne was a small girl playing around Mother. She picked up this bottle and drank some formaldehyde. Fortunately, we had the phone. Mother phoned Mrs. B., who suggested Mother pour sour milk down Anne's throat. She was quite sick for a long time, but did recover and is still around living in Cleveland. I believe that was the closest Mother came to losing one of her children" (Bill R. 1989: 6).

[5] "I remember that at some point or other I fell and rolled down the hill. Well, I think I didn't roll. I just was…My head rolled, probably. I don't remember any of it."
Interview with Anne R, Cleveland, Ohio, January 13, 2003, p. 6.

[6] Because Anne's narrative about enjoying weed pulling occurred outside of the taped interviews, I cannot directly quote her. However, I wrote extensive journal notes of my

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visit with Anne and documented her delightful anecdote about offering her weed-pulling services to the highest bidder at the fundraiser-auction. (MJ Journal entry, 14 January 2004.)

[7] Ukrainian-Canadian History in the Vegreville, Alberta community.

[8] *Nancy*: Well she [Mother] tried to have the twelve dishes. I remember that she had…and we couldn't eat until the first star was in the heavens. The first star and then we'd eat, but not before. I remember that well…."
Interview with Nancy R, 26 May 1995, Edmonton, AB, Tape 1, (#259)

[9] A year later, Anne wrote her sister Vera several letters, containing anecdotes of Ukrainian-Canadian life at Soda Lake in which she recounted further events of her childhood, perhaps prompted by my encouragement and questions, and feeling more at ease talking with a sister.

For example, from her letter of March 8th, 2004, Anne writes:
"Do you remember the pussy-willows? I never see them here [in Cleveland]. And do you remember when father gave each of us a hoe with instructions to hill the potatoes in a large field. You devised a scheme to encourage us; namely, to hoe a small square and pretend it was all we had to hill. Then another one; then another one. And father would wait till the last minute, the last minute being when a snow storm would threaten, before digging up the potatoes."

[10] For example, Anne's younger sister Vera touched upon this matter.
Vera: We were discriminated against as far as jobs were concerned. I don't know if you know Anne's story about how she finally got a job teaching school in an English neighborhood by saying her name was "R…." Right when she did this, they weren't smart enough to check up with the Department of Education—if there was any teacher with that name.

But this one guy got suspicious because of the way she asked for her checks. He researched and found out that she was Ukrainian. I guess they called a meeting and were all for throwing her out. But by that time, a lot of people had gotten to know her and said, "Hey!" [what's the problem?] The school was in an English community, close by a Ukrainian community.
Interview with Vera R, 25 March 1995, Berkeley, CA, Tape 2, p. 9.

[11] Ukrainian-Canadian history in the Vegreville, Alberta community.

[12] Sam, one of Anne's elder brothers, describes Easter.
"I must have had my mind on all those good things to eat, because I do not remember much of the morning services. I remember more clearly the afternoon celebration, when we went back to church and were permitted to ring the bells as often and as loudly as we wished" (Sam R., 1982: 34).

K Family Origins

Like the R sisters, the narratives of the K sisters—Annie, Kay and Pauline—are bound to their family heritage as the second generation of a large Ukrainian-Canadian family.[1] Their parents Andrew K[2] and Anna H[3] emigrated to the Northwest Territories (Saskatchewan, Canada), from their village of Ulychno in what is now western Ukraine.[4] The two found their way to Canada separately, but their respective families were acquainted. The K family and the H family knew or knew of each other in Ulychno, for according to several of his children, Andrew K ultimately settled near the H family in Birmingham, Saskatchewan because they were Ulychno kinsmen. The twenty-three year old Andrew traveled solo and Anna traveled with her parents—Maksym and Annie[5]—and her five brothers and sisters.[6]

Maksym and Annie H settled their growing family in an area northeast of the site of Birmingham, Saskatchewan (now a ghost town). According to his son Harry, Maksym, having informed himself at local reading club—*chytalnia*—meetings in Ulychno about emigration to Canada, understood that he would need to build a *burdei* upon arrival and packed the tools to do so. Thus, the H family spent its first year in a *burdei*,[7] waiting until Maksym could build a more substantial *khata*.

By 1905, Andrew K had relocated to the Birmingham area, where he filed for a quarter section[8] directly adjacent to and due west of Maksym and Annie H's quarter section. There he built a three-room[9] *khata*, married Maksym and Annie's eldest, the now nineteen-year old Anna,[10] and settled into life as an immediate neighbor of her parents, her uncle Wasyl and his family, and ultimately Anna's five brothers and four sisters. Harry H, Anna's youngest brother, was born seven years after Anna's marriage to Andrew K. It is from Harry that we derive the bulk of impressions regarding the homesteading life at Maksym and Annie's, including occasional glimpses of the events and lives of the K family at that time.

By all accounts, Maksym and Annie were devout Catholics, that is, they were observers of Greek Catholic church ritual.[11] They were also zealous Ukrainians and marked calendar rituals and rite of passage rituals in keeping with the ethnic heritage they had brought with them from Ulychno. Anna, their daughter, would have been influenced in some measure, by her parents' ritual adherence. Their youngest child, Harry H, when interviewed, speaks at length about his parents' ritual observance of the Christmas period, the depth of their belief and the thoroughness of their ritual activity. Harry himself seems to have embraced their spirit—recalling with detailed clarity what, when and how Maksym and Annie ordered their lives with ritual.[12]

Andrew and Anna K's children—Annie, Kay and Pauline among them, grew up surrounded by uncles, aunts and cousins from the H side of the family.[13] Maksym and Annie H were a very real presence in their lives. Although Andrew and Anna K were devoutly religious and observed Ukrainian-Canadian ritual traditions as well, they seem to have been overshadowed somewhat by the grandparents.[14] Essentially, they deferred to the influence of Maksym and Annie, who lived just across the fields, less than a thirty-minute walk on a summer's day. Unlike Maksym and Annie, Andrew and Anna K did not carry out every calendar or rite of passage ritual to the letter; whereas, Maksym and Annie were likely to celebrate Christmas, *Iordan*, Easter, and *Zeleni Sviata* with more attention to detail. This would seem only natural, for as the grandparent generation, they looked back to their roots and sought to maintain a connection. Honoring births, marriages, deaths and calendar rites in the manner in which these things were done in Ulychno was a way of expressing their identity. For the K children, at least for Annie, Kay and Pauline, they delighted in life at the home of their grandparents, Maksym and Annie.[15]

However, there appears to have been some tension. Andrew K, perhaps began as a Ukrainian Catholic in Ulychno, that is as a Greek Catholic, but once in Canada, he embraced Ukrainian Orthodox practice. His transformation may have had something to do with his distaste for the Poles, who, according to Andrew, in his youth had tried to press him into military service.[16] It was undoubtedly hard for the solidly Ukrainian

Catholic H family to watch Andrew K insist upon his own church in the Birmingham area, but insist he did, and spearheaded the building of the Independent Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Birmingham which he and other supporters, among them a number of Maksym's sons, attended.[17] The point to be made is that both Andrew K and the H family were religiously devout. The K girls grew up in a milieu of ritual observance, of acceptance and respect for ritual. They absorbed what their parents and grandparents modeled for them. It never occurred to them to question what they were doing, for their elders did not question it, they simply observed the rituals in a reverential and unquestioning manner.

When the K family struck out for a new homestead in Alberta from their Birmingham home in 1928,[18] it was a difficult leave-taking for all. The K family and the H family, religious differences aside, were bound by bonds of mutual respect, love, and a shared family and ethnic heritage. Kay notes how on April 1st, 1928, as an eleven-year old on the platform of the Birmingham railway station, she saw that the weeping among the adults was heart-rending. The children were thrilled to be off on an adventure, to ride on a train, to eat a picnic lunch on the train for the very first time. But the adults clung to each other and freely wailed, knowing that it would no longer be easy to visit; they mourned the loss of family closeness.[19]

Thus, the K family's history divides into two parts, first, life in Saskatchewan from 1905 to 1928 with the H grandparents to the east and the H uncles, aunts and cousins all around, then, second, life in Alberta from 1928 onwards. Once in Alberta, the Ks no longer had the comforting presence (support) of the H grandparents and their extended family, however, there were Ukrainian-Canadians in the Glendon area, and the K family involved itself in community activity.

The K family quickly gained a foothold in the Glendon area. By 1931 or 1932, Andrew and Anna K were active in Ukrainian-Canadian community affairs to the extent that they were major players in the establishment of the Glendon Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church of the Holy Trinity and the Ukrainian National Hall.[20] In the fashioning of these institutions, they seem to have been socially motivated, as opposed to being politically motivated. In other words, they did not deliberately seek office; they did not actively seek key leadership position(s) in the community, rather, they worked behind the scenes to augment and create community resources. Andrew and Anna were supremely good neighbors. They directed their energies towards social integration, towards assimilation. Indeed, the vector of K family identity is towards social integration. The K family sought to blend in with the people around them. Social and gregarious, they tended to avoid confrontation in favor of consensus, that is, their orientation toward community tended to be more social in tone than political.

Their daughters, Annie, Kay and Pauline are the second, third and fourth sisters among the five K sisters. The eldest was Nellie[21] and the youngest, Olga.[22] I never had the opportunity to get to know Olga. Described as warm-hearted and sweet-natured by her surviving sisters, Olga was stricken with polio when she was three years old and died at the relatively early age of forty-nine, due to complications of the disease. Nellie lived a long life. She died at the age of ninety-five, but in her later years, after I had arrived in Edmonton and was interested in interviewing her, she was afflicted by a series of catastrophes, beginning with a hip-breaking fall in her backyard garden and culminating with the death of her husband. The sum total of these events sent Nellie into a profound depression. Although I visited with her on a number of occasions, an appropriate time for a taped interview slipped away, as did Nellie. I regret her loss and the loss of her voice to this study, for she had the capacity to give a fuller sense of K family identity to these pages. It is Annie, Kay and Pauline who have off and on spoken on behalf of Nellie.

According to Annie, Kay and Pauline, Nellie seems to have been ear-marked by her mother, Anna, as helpmate. She was placed in charge of the younger children and given a heavy load of household tasks which she performed to the best of her ability. She was loving and mild, often bested by her younger sister Annie, who when pressed to help with chores would take herself off to the grandparents' homestead to escape. Nellie taught herself to sew and the excellence and artistry of her technique resulted in beautiful flounces and frills in the dresses of her delighted younger sisters. Later, as an adult, she sewed professionally and her own self-made wardrobe was styled with an artist's eye and stitched to perfection by careful hands. She was quick to smile and to laugh and suffered perhaps from too much silence.

In the following pages, we will examine the narratives of Annie, Kay and Pauline to see what they reveal about K family identity.

A Word About Anna

Mother of the K sisters, Anna exerted as profound an influence on her daughters as Maria did on hers, however it was quite different in tone and focus. Anna appears to have been easy-going, a compromiser, a facilitator and a consummate tranquilizer—she smoothed away the rough and often contradictory edges—in her family. She seems to have absorbed the warmth and playfulness of her own parents, Maksym and Annie H, and like them enjoyed the sense of community that extensive Ukrainian-Canadian connections in Birmingham and later Glendon brought her. Also perhaps like her parents and her husband, she was conservative in the sense that she was devoutly religious and observed Ukrainian-Canadian rituals in a respectful and reverent manner. Along with her husband, she was very involved in church activities.

Anna was a private person, revealing her thoughts rarely, if at all.[23] Undoubtedly she wanted her children to succeed in every way, but unlike Maria R, Anna was not tied to notions of educational achievement. She did not proselytize the virtues of an education and among her sons and daughters, educational yearning was self-generated.

Nellie K, Anna's eldest daughter, was tapped not only to double for, but to be an amanuensis for her mother. The tradition of the oldest girl, stepping in for her mother, particularly in large families, was wide-spread during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Nellie became a model (of motherhood) for her younger sisters. Her sphere was that of home and church. She devoted herself to a tidy house, well-prepared meals, beautifully designed and sewn clothes for the family, and was often bested by recalcitrant younger brothers[24] or her tomboy sister, Annie. Anna, too, had to deal at times with a stubborn husband, but she mitigated against his sometimes difficult nature and occasional bouts of "overindulgence" with tolerance. Both Anna and Nellie revealed a softening of the confrontational nature that Andrew K and his sons might have held, especially with regard to religious issues in the community. Thus, the K sisters absorbed something about family solidarity from their mother. They kept one another's secrets, protecting against their parents and against outside authority, while nevertheless mingling freely and participating actively with the surrounding community.

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[1] In birth order, with birth date in parentheses ( ), the eleven K siblings are John "Jack" (17 January 1906), Nellie (27 February 1907), Anna (c.1907-08. Stillborn), Peter (12 January 1910), Annie (22 January 1912), Mike (17 February 1914), Bill (12 March 1916), Kay (18 May 1917), Pauline (15 September 1919), Olga (4 April 1921) and Alex "Alec" (17 June 1923).

[2] Andrew K was born on February 18/19, 1879 in Ulychno. He disembarked in Canada at the age of 23, from the *S.S. Armenia* in 1902. The steamship *Armenia* sailed from Hamburg, Germany on November 4th, 1902 and arrived at the port of Halifax on November 19th, 1902. The ship's entry log reads, "Kondrekiewice Andry male 23 farmer born in Galicia with $10.00 bound for Grenfell, Assiniboia."
Records and research of The Honourable Mr. Justice A. M. Kindred, a family member, in a letter dated 14 February 1987 to Peter K, son of Andrew K. Personal collection of author.

It seems that life in Ulychno was uniquely difficult for Andrew. His mother, Pearl Kozakewich, died. He had a brother, Peter, and a sister, Katerina (or Maria?). When his father, Ivan K., remarried, the second wife brought her son, Fred, into the family. Andrew struck out on his own, and was conscripted into the Austro-Hungarian army.

Because there is some question among K family siblings, whether Andrew was in the military, I asked Kay to speak to this issue:

MJ: Did your father ever talk about his life in the village [Ulychno] in Halychyna?
KM: Yeah. Yeah. Well, dad, O.K., had a stepbrother. So therefore his mother died. And dad really liked his mother. And he didn't like his second mother, so therefore he was in the army. You see, there was such turmoil in that era. One day it's Germany, next day it's Poland, next day it's Russia. So he said he was in the German army, in the Polish, and he hated the Polish 'til the day he died, and the Russian. In fact, he went A.W.O.L. and he caught a cattle boat. That's how he came to Canada.
MJ: You know, I have interviewed a number of your siblings and no one can quite agree if your father was actually in the military.
KM: Yes he was.
MJ: My dad, Pete, your older brother, said "No. No." Now how do you know he was [in the army]?
KM: How do I know he was? Because when I left Glendon, I said I'm not marrying the guy next door, not here. And so I started to travel and so I was going into Germany and Austria…
MJ: And so you were travelling in Europe.
KM: Yes, I was travelling in Europe and I came home the week before and he said to me, Kay, don't ever go in there, because, he said, 'they might pick you up.' He said, 'I ran away from the army and they might still have my name there.' So *that* I know for sure, I know for sure, because dad wouldn't say you know [these things on a whim]. So he says, 'As long as I live, please don't go.' And it's funny, like because when we went into

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Austria and granddad worked in the Black Forest. And somehow or another, you do, I'm not psychic, but somehow or other you feel something. And we were going by this little old church, in Austria in the Black Forest and the church doors were open. We went in and people were lighting candles in memory and I went in there and I lit a candle for mum and dad. And I thought to myself, 'I've done my duty.' Yeah. Yeah. [laughter]
Interview with Kay K, 7 February 2005, Edmonton, AB p. 14.

In 1904, Andrew's step-mother in Ulychno bore a daughter, Nastunia (Nellie). Andrew was in Canada by this time and had no knowledge of this step-sister. Nastunia was alive in Ulychno in 1993 and stated that she'd been told of an older brother in Birmingham. Records of and personal visit by The Honourable Mr. Justice A. M. Kindred, a family member, in a letter with an enclosed photo dated 23 February 1993 to Peter K, son of Andrew K. Personal collection of author.

Information about Andrew's siblings also can be found *in Pylypiw: The Descendants of Joannes and Catharina (Kuszniv)*, compiled by Irene Olynyk, Bertha Pylypow and Carol Pylypow. A self-published family publication. 1987, p. 63. Personal collection of author.

In Canada, Andrew was taken in by an English-speaking farmer, who bred and raised horses, in Indian Head, SK. At the time, Indian Head was the last stop for the west-bound train. Good at handling horses, Andrew acquired further expertise and the beginnings of English while working for this farmer. Andrew had some education in Ulychno. He could read and write with a beautiful, flowing script. By 1905, Andrew had found his way to Birmingham, SK, having worked for two years and saved enough money to file for his own quarter section.
Interview with Kay K, 25 February 2000, Edmonton, AB.

[3] Anna H, the eldest child of Maksym and Annie H, was born in Ulychno on the 12th of December 1886. With her parents and five siblings, the seventeen year old emigrated to Canada, arriving in Halifax aboard the *S.S. Assyria* on the 18th of June 1903. From there, the H family took a train to Grenfell, SK and then a wagon to the Birmingham district, where Maksym filed on a quarter section [NE22-23-7 W2]. The family built a *burdei* and with oxen, either borrowed or acquired, began to break the prairie. Anna was sent out to do chores and to do haying and stooking for neighboring farmers. The small income she earned from this helped the family.
Pylypiw: The Descendants of Joannes and Catharina (Kuszniv), compiled by Irene Olynyk, Bertha Pylypow and Carol Pylypow. A self-published family publication. 1987, p. 5 and 66. Personal collection of author.

[4] Ulychno [Russian: Ulychne] is situated slightly south and east of the city of Striy in present-day western Ukraine. Ulychno is in Drohobych raion, L'vivska oblast. The village looks across the river Striy to the Carpathian Mountains. At the time of immigration for the H family and for Andrew K, Ulychno was a village in the Austro-Hungarian province of Galicia, or according to Ukrainian usage, Halychyna.

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[5] Maksym H, born in Ulychno (b. 29 September 1857) married Annie Pylypiw (b. 8 August 1862) in 1885. Family lore has it that Maksym was a game warden, guarding the local forest preserves for those who owned them. He seems to have received some education in the village, for not only could he read and write, but according to his son, Harry, Maksym read to others at *chytalnia* [a reading club, associated with the Prosvita Society (see note below)] meetings in Ulychno.

In an interview Harry says, "Mom [Annie H] used to say was that Dad was fairly active as a Ukrainian. He could read and he could write. And they had…he'd get these papers and he'd read to the whole class…it wasn't a class, but they'd all gather together and read…that was in the village of Ulychno….[they called it] a *chytalnia* …so he was reading when they'd get any paper. He would read and all these guys were listening. But the minute… they had it so arranged. The minute a Pole come in or this half-Polish guy, so they'd start singing…[the Ukrainians would start singing] pretending that they were not doing this thing.

According to Mom, he was active. He was one…he thought it wasn't fair that it was Ukraine, a Ukrainian country and the Poles come over…He was an organizer, to such an extent…well, he was looking for the rights of Ukraine… But he was very active, he was doing the reading. And Mom said that she knew well that they were so mad at him. He was gonna be killed. That's what Mom's story was, all the time."
Interview with Harry H, 9 November 2002, Saskatoon, SK Tape #1, p. 13

The H family's arrival in Canada must have relieved Annie's heart considerably, for the Austrian authorities in the Ulychno area had made it clear that Maksym's *chytalnia* activities would not be tolerated much longer.

Maksym and Annie seem to have been kind-hearted, playful, gregarious, socially committed and deeply religious. According to his son, Harry, Maksym helped to build, had consecrated and attended the small church named St. Paraskevia Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in Birmingham.
Pylypiw: The Descendants of Joannes and Catharina (Kuszniv), compiled by Irene Olynyk, Bertha Pylypow and Carol Pylypow. A self-published family publication. 1987, p. 90. Personal collection of the author.

A monument erected in the Birmingham cemetery, also the former grounds of the St. Paraskevia Ukrainian Greek Catholic church reads

> St. Paraskevia Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and Cemetery, Birmingham. Settlers came in 1903 mainly from Ulyczno, western Ukraine. Through trusteeship and generosity of the early settlers, the church was established in 1910 and served by Presbyterian Nicholas Saitzeff. December 12, 1912, Fr. A. Delaere claimed the church for Greek Catholics. First di vine liturgy January 12, 1913. Operative to 1983. Served by the Redemptorist Fathers of Ituna. Initial founders were: Maksym Halyk, Wasyl Halyk, Andrew Komarechka, Paul Glowa, Stefan Sawchyn, Andrew Kendrakewich, Theodore Feduk, Ivan Winnitski, Ilko Pylypiw,

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> Ilko Chonko, Wasyl Sawchyn, Hnat Regus. Carpenter: Wasyl Kornach, Mike Kostysyin. Cemetery was established and blessed in 1934. [Monument] Erected by St. Paraskevia Congregation, Saskatchewan Heritage Year 1985.

Author's visit to the cemetery, August, 2003.

The Prosvita (Enlightenment) Society was formed in 1868 in Galicia—in L'viv— by a group of students, teachers and young professionals (Ukrainophiles), secular and progressive in outlook with democratic ideals, who championed the interests of the Ukrainian peasantry. The Prosvita Society was dedicated to the publication of popular literature and the promotion of village reading circles. Its establishment "signaled the beginning of National Populist (Ukrainophile) efforts to build a mass movement [to counter the political influence of the Poles, the Russians and the Galician Russophiles, all of whom were vying for power in the area]" (Martynowych 1991: 11-12).

[6] Accompanying the seventeen-year-old Anna on the *S.S. Assyria* 1903-voyage to Canada were fourteen-year old Mike (2 October 1889), eight-year old Theo (22 February 1895), six-year old Pearl (8 November 1897), three-year old Katie (September 1900), and two-year old Metro (1901). After arrival in the Northwest Territories, Anna's parents, Maksym and Annie, had four more children. They were John (1904), Nick (11 November 1906), Nellie (14 March 1910) and Harry (12 April 1912), who has become his family's spirited chronicler. Maksym and Annie H had four other children, among them a set of twins, who were born and deceased in Ulychno.
Pylypiw: The Descendants of Joannes and Catharina (Kuszniv), compiled by Irene Olynyk, Bertha Pylypow and Carol Pylypow. A self-published family publication. 1987, p. 3-4. Personal collection of author.

[7] The H family has marked the site of the *burdei* with a plaque. H family reunion, August 2-4, 2003.

[8] The quarter section was NW22-23-7-W2. Maksym held quarter section NE22-23-7-W2. Maksym's brother, Wasyl H, who was married to Maksym's wife's sister, also emigrated and settled on quarter section SW22-23-7-W2.

[9] A basic *khata* consisted of two rooms separated by a storage space. The three-room structure is larger and would require more resources to build. It is possible that Andrew K was able to erect this larger structure, two rooms facing south and one room— the width of the front (south) two rooms, facing north, with the help of his H in-laws. Author's observation of the *khata*.

[10] The couple was married on the 14th of February 1905.

[11] It has been noted that Maksym built St. Paraskevia Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in Birmingham, SK. In a series of interviews with son, Harry, it is obvious that Maksym was a fervent follower of the Greek Catholic faith. He was sorely aggrieved when his son-in-law, Andrew K, championed a Greek Orthodox church in the community. Andrew

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K seems to have been key in the building and consecration of the Independent Orthodox Church of Birmingham.
Pylypiw: The Descendants of Joannes and Catharina (Kuszniv), compiled by Irene Olynyk, Bertha Pylypow and Carol Pylypow. A self-published family publication. 1987, p. 65. Personal collection of the author.

In speaking of his father's religiosity, Harry H notes that as children, " we'd all kneel down and pray for supper, you know. [One of Maksym's grandsons remembers his grandfather as 'an angel.']…. [Speaking for this grandson, Harry says that…] He always thinks of him [Maksym] as an angel. You know he's [Maksym's] in there and he was praying and he was kind of praying out loud. And we were kind of following him…and after that we'd do our part. And we'd get up. And he'd be still praying, and he'd be thanking God and asking for favors and doing, oh, a lot of his things. So he [the grandson] thought that Dad was really religious in his books."
Interview with Harry H, 9 November 2002, Saskatoon, SK Tape #1, p. 8-9.

[12] Harry can still describe in vivid detail how Maksym and Annie observed calendar rituals. In excerpts from an interview, Harry speaks of his parents' celebration of Christmas and New Year. His eldest sister, Anna, would have been inured to the manner in which the parents celebrated these calendar rites as well. What follows is an extended description of H family ritual activity, included here to give some flavor to what the K sisters, as children were exposed to.

Harry states that "on Christmas Eve we never ate at all that day, not until the evening…. When the first star came out, that's when the boys [his five older brothers] would…get the sheaf. Dad [Maksym] helped to shook [shake] the chaff from the star [Harry means to say "sheaf."]. Then it was put in what was called a *moshee*.

I'd go get the straw, the hay. I'd bring *Gido* in [The sheaf is referred to as *Gido* or "grandfather."] and we'd say *Dobri vechir* [Good evening] and then we'd say *Sviatiy vechir* [Holy evening]. We'd get the straw and spread it out on the floor and get it all ready…and where I mentioned, that's where that table was. *Gido* [the grandfather sheaf] would be sittin' right in the corner of the wall there….

Then we'd spread the hay on the table and spread it out and then cover it with a tablecloth. We'd then get down and say our prayers. Johnny P [Harry's cousin] thought that Grandfather [Maksym] was like an angel, because he sat in there [in the hay, praying]. We all seemed to follow him, like a hen with a batch of chicks, you know. We kind of respected him.

Then we'd all sit around the table and Mom [Annie] would take the stuff that they have in church—some hot ashes [incense]. And she'd go around and bless the whole house with that, with the *laven* [?]. So she'd make that part. And we sat there after we prayed. We sat there… a fork and a spoon was left there for each one and we just had the one plate [The whole family would eat from one serving plate.]. Wheat [*kutia*] was the first thing. So we'd have that. Dad would make a cross and then he'd throw it up in the air, to try to catch it…[if] it fell in your hand, but you were not supposed to guide it there… that was good luck….

If it stuck there [to the ceiling], two kernels , that was supposed to be the amount of cars [car or wagon box loads] of grain … he's gonna get from that…Then when supper's done we'd be singin' Christmas carols."

In the morning, [of Christmas Day], then the boys will go into the barn and bring a young bull, it's a bull. So they'd bring him right into the house. And they'd give him, then, because they'd call it a *polaznik*, that guy's supposed to be like, somebody that comes that's very hungry. A *polaznik*.

So then, when they'd bring this in, you had a hard time to push him in and all that. So there was straw in the house all over. So Mom would take that bread, she'd get it wet and she'd roll it. She'd start from this *porih* [floor threshold beam], that was from this side, to make sure that when she'd roll it, it would hit that wall. She'd hold it to the side so that it would roll, not just slide, so it would roll. She was good at it, too. Every time she did, she'd roll it all the way to the wall. That was supposed to be good luck. Good luck….

[Mom would roll the bread…] To hit the wall. And it's supposed to go underneath, underneath the calf. That would be about a one-year-old or a year-and-a-half old little bull…And one time as she rolled it, this bull got kind'a scared. And he kicked. He kicked and hit the heater, the tin heater. He kicked the tin heater and bent it right there and the pipes kind'a come down. So we had to climb up and put it back up.

She [Mom] was doing that, all, year after year. That was a tradition. That was done since I remember, and before, I was big enough to bring the sheep in. So when they brought the straw in, Nelly [Harry's older sister] and me would stand on this bench and jump on that straw, pretending that we're horses. We'd make up these noises of horses and cows and chickens…

On the evening before winter supper, the best food that there was, they'd [Maksym and Annie would] give for the horses. In place of puttin' straw in the manger, they'd put hay in the manger, for the cattle and horses and all that…to feed 'em right for Christmas Eve. [The belief was that on Christmas Eve, the animals could talk with God.] It's the same for *Iordan*. We did much the same tradition, ritual….

And then Christmas day, after. Apparently, that animal [the bull calf] had to leave the remains [it had to poop in the *khata*]. And then we'd pick it up in the straw and toss it away. And after that, we'd take him away and we'd go back to that same table. You had your forks and your knife and that. They were kept in that [sheaf], you used those, they never were picked up from there. After breakfast you took your own fork, or the spoon. Mostly it was just a spoon and put it in the twine of the sheaf. So each one, wherever it

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was that you sat. You'd put it around there, so you could pick it up after and use it again. The dishes weren't washed or anything. You'd just use your own [spoon].

And then, that Christmas lasts. The third day you'd take the straw down, the floor used to get so slippery, you know, because there's a little wax in the straw. Yeah. Sweep it up and it looks so nice and clean [the floor]. I know that Mom and sister Nelly, they'd be sweeping and we'd be carrying it [the straw] out. And then when we'd take that straw and we'd burn that straw. And while it was burning, you'd jump over the fire….You'd take it right in front of the house and set the fire and jump across it, so you don't get a headache or a fever. You go through the fire to get cleaned. It's healing. [Harry notes that the straw would not be heaped into the shape of a cross on the ground.]…We just put it in a pile….So that was the tradition of Christmas….

On New Year's we didn't celebrate that, that much. Dad would sit and read the Bible aloud. And he used to kind'a read the church prayer….On New Year's Day, again, Mom, you know, would take, next to the house, at the house there was a porch and then they had a little fence in here for a flower garden. So she would have the tradition of puttin' a stick up against the wall to see for….In those flower beds she would put on, New Year's…she would put those sticks up against the wall. If anybody was going to die, one of those sticks would fall. See it was for Dad, Mom, and the oldest, down the line. I was the last one [the youngest of their ten children] in there. So those sticks always stayed there while I was at home. There was none that fell down and there was no deaths. That was her tradition, of puttin' those sticks on New Year's Day."
Interview with Harry H. 10 November 2002, Saskatoon, SK Tape #3, (#023-on).

[13] Annie K and Harry H, although niece and uncle, are age equals, having both been born in 1912. Both have stated to me that they were playmates as children.

[14] When asked whether his oldest sister, Anna, would have observed Christmas in the manner of Maksym and Annie H, Harry says, "Andrew and Anna K and brother Mike H, they didn't bring the straw, they just put some hay on the table and they had a sheaf. But they didn't go to the ritual that my Dad [Maksym] and Mom [Annie] went….They [Maksym and Annie] went through what they did in Ukraine [in Ulychno].
Interview with Harry H. 10 November 2002, Saskatoon, SK Tape #3, (#133-136).

[15] Kay says, " We used to *love* going to Grandmother's place. They were little people. They weren't tall. Grandmother was about five feet [tall] and Grandpa was about five feet, six inches [tall]. Very kind people. When we went there…they were very strong Catholics, very strong Catholics. So when we used to go to Grandmother's, we always had to line up, say our prayers and then we could sleep with Grandmother and Grandfather."
Interview with Kay K. 25 February 2000, Edmonton, AB, p. 3.

[16] According to Andrew's son Pete, who at this writing is a hale and hearty 94-year old, Andrew had a falling out with the Ukrainian Catholic priest(s) visiting Birmingham, SK.

Evidently, because Andrew and Anna's home, at the northern edge of Birmingham, was not far from the railroad station, and because Andrew and Anna were known to be devoutly religious and of a generous nature, the priest(s), sometimes accompanied by one or more nuns, would lean on K family hospitality when they arrived to Birmingham to perform services. Pete recalls that with a large family and one or more religious authorities in the small house, Andrew began to resent the inconvenience of it all. No doubt, a number of factors contributed to Andrew's conversion from the Catholic to the Orthodox faith.
Peter K, September 2004, Bloomington, Indiana, Dinnertable discussion.

[17] *Pylypiw: The Descendants of Joannes and Catharina (Kuszniv)*, compiled by Irene Olynyk, Bertha Pylypow and Carol Pylypow. A self-published family publication. 1987, p. 66. Personal collection of author.

Harry H also comments in an interview, "But Dad, thought…kind of…after that…when that Birmingham [Orthodox] church that was built… and after these Orthodox, young guys fell apart [away from the Catholic church], so it was only Dad and Uncle [Wasyl H] that were left [attending St. Paraskevia Greek Catholic church], and their sons went to the Orthodox.

They were all Greek Catholics when they come from Ukraine, even…like Andrew K and… but because of that Polish thing [Here, Harry refers to the tension between the primarily Catholic Polish inhabitants and the Ukrainians in the Ulychno area], so they [people like Andrew K] changed to the Orthodox. I think that that was the only reason. And …that priest that come [to Birmingham],…he kind of explained it to these guys…and he kind of ran this Polish down. And [to] some of them …he [a pro-Orthodox, pro-Ukrainian priest] kind of drilled into them, and they all went that direction. So that church [St. Paraskevia Greek Catholic Church] was closed for quite a long time."
Interview with Harry H, 9 November 2002, Saskatoon, SK Tape #1, p. 8-9.

[18] In 1928, with prolonged drought across southeastern Saskatchewan, Andrew K decided to abandon his farm. It was, perhaps, a hasty decision, at least according to members of the H clan [at the H family reunion in August 2003]. The extended H family remained in the Birmingham area. Somehow, in the compromised circumstances of 1927-1928, Andrew could see no way to continue farming and was concerned for the future of his children. Andrew packed his personal belongings, his prized horses, cattle, feed, machinery and household articles in a few cattle cars on a freight train of the Canadian National Railway. Two of Andrew's sons, Peter and Mike, rode in the cattle cars, in order to tend the animals. The family, laden with brown-bag lunches and with eighteen children in tow—the K children and those of a neighbor who had decided to make the trip as well, boarded a passenger car. The giddy, sad entourage rolled west to Alberta on April 1, 1928, and ultimately and not without difficulty, established their new farms north of Glendon, Alberta.

Pylypiw: The Descendants of Joannes and Catharina (Kuszniv), compiled by Irene Olynyk, Bertha Pylypow and Carol Pylypow. A self-published family publication. 1987, p. 66. Personal collection of author.
Informal talk with Peter K. Andrew's son, June 2004, Bloomington, Indiana.

[19] In a fast car, say120 kilometers per hour, on today's more-or-less excellent provincial highways, the driving time between Birmingham, Saskatchewan, and Glendon, Alberta, is approximately ten hours. This writer can attest to the mind-numbing distance. Even now, the distance is an impediment for two branches of an extended family interacting more than once a year, if that.

[20] According to a local history, Andrew and Anna K were among the founding ten Ukrainian-Canadian families in the "early thirties" to form an Orthodox parish in Glendon. "These pioneers felt that a community centre should be built which could serve as a social centre as well as a place of worship until a church was built. In 1935-36, they built the [wood frame] Ukrainian National Hall."
So Soon Forgotten: A History of Glendon and Districts. Glendon, Alberta: Glendon Historical Society, 1985, p. 295.

The Glendon Ukrainian-Canadian National Hall was twice destroyed by fire [1936 and 1945]: arson was suspected. The Orthodox parishioners persevered and in 1945 construction on the Holy Trinity [Ukrainian Greek Orthodox] Church of Glendon began. The church served as community hall and church until a third, and this time, brick, national hall could be built in Glendon in 1947. Throughout this construction boom, Andrew and Anna K were among key financial supporters who also volunteered supplies and time, although Andrew seems not to have held church office. For example, he does not appear to have been on the church executive committee, but as a key donor and supporter, he is prominent in photos of the congregation, as is Anna.
So Soon Forgotten: A History of Glendon and Districts. Glendon, Alberta: Glendon Historical Society, 1985, p. 294-300.

Kay adds more insight to her father's community activity in Glendon:
MJ: The history book talks a little bit about your father. And I was just curious what your take was on his level of activity.
KM: Well, OK. They didn't have a church in Glendon, so dad, if he'd built one church [in Birmingham, Saskatchewan], he was going to build another one [in Glendon, Alberta]. I give him credit, you know, for guts. So they used to have a Ukrainian hall in Glendon. So they used to put on Ukrainian plays, get all the younger people in plays. Philip [sister Nellie's husband] was very good at that.
MJ: Oh really. Was he an actor?
KM: No. No. He was the organizer, because he spoke Ukrainian very well and so, they'd have plays and dances and box socials and there was something going on all the time, collecting money, collecting money for this church. So eventually they got enough to start and then dad, with some of his friends, got this guy to give a hundred, and this guy to give a hundred, and this guy, and everybody worked. There was one guy that was a

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carpenter. Another guy, a painter. So they put it up for nothing. And that's the way that church was built. They didn't have much to start with, but eventually they got the altar and that, but that was hard work.

MJ: After having read the information in the book, I had the sense that your father was kind of like a really good fundraiser ...

KM: Yes he was.

MJ:...and organizer, however he wasn't like the president of the whole thing.

KM: No. No.

MJ: He was sort of helping behind the scenes.

KM: Yup. Yup. Oh yeah, he was always asking for money. He was good at it. And of course his friends, his neighbor, he'd say, 'So Mr. Spatzer gave 500, how about you? Up it.' You know, and that was a good community-spirited man, he was a good helper. Mother was more on the shy side. I think, because she didn't speak the language; whereas dad, it didn't make any difference whether he could speak it. He'd turn it around, but everybody knew what he was talking about. He did very well, considering.

Interview with Kay K, 7 February 2005, Edmonton, AB, p. 11.

[21] Nellie K was born on 27 February 1907, the second child of Andrew and Anna K. She died on 29 August 2002 at the age of ninety-five. She married Philip K on 11 October 1929 when she was twenty-two years old. They had one son.

[22] Olga K was born on 4 April 1921, the tenth of eleven K children. She died on 7 April 1970.

[23] Mother was quite close-mouthed, you know. Very private. And of course, us kids didn't help matters. When she tried to speak English, she'd get it all wrong and we'd laugh at her, which was wicked. And therefore she just didn't, and that was it. No, she was very private and yet, very giving. Very giving.

Interview with Kay K, 7 February 2005, Edmonton, AB, p. 13.

[24] The K brothers appear to have taken many behavioral cues from their slightly older or age-equal H uncles, infamous in the Birmingham neighborhood for their practical jokes which edged into the arena of malicious pranks—eg. out houses moved in the night, wagons disassembled and then reassembled on a rooftop.

Kay K

Similarly to Katherine R in the previous section, Kay K has been pivotal to this study. Kay has been my entrée to her sisters and to the K family. Before I journeyed to Alberta in 1995, Kay and I had never met. She is one of my father's younger sisters, seventh K sibling, and among her four sisters—Nellie, Annie, Pauline and Olga, the third or middle sister. She is easy to talk to, quick to laughter, naturally gregarious, a practiced storyteller. It is delicious to sit at her kitchen table in Edmonton and listen to her. Her fondest personal narratives are about her now-deceased husband, Rocky, who by all accounts was a "character." Kay and I have laughed until our sides ached over her telling of Rocky's exploits—for example, the time he did the Highland fling in a too-short nightshirt interrupting the evening prayers of Uncle Harry and his wife in the adjacent hotel room. She obviously misses Rocky in her life and keeps him near in finely crafted narratives.

Kay is pleased and curious—what could I possibly derive from my listening to her and her sisters talk? Kay carries herself, as an adult, in a self-deprecating manner.[1]
It is Kay who encourages me to drive to Saskatchewan and talk with "Uncle Harry"—Harry H, who is five years older than Kay, and is indeed her uncle. It is Kay who arranges for our trip to Grimshaw, a six-hour drive north from Edmonton, to interview her older sister, Annie K. And it is Kay, who calls me to tell me that younger sister Pauline, now a resident of Florida, will be attending the August 2003 family reunion in Saskatchewan, and that in late July, I should have a good opportunity to interview her in Edmonton.

Kay helps behind the scenes too. She smoothes the way for me with Harry and with both of her sisters, Pauline and Annie. Annie in Grimshaw—not to be confused with grandmother Annie H, has little to no interest in talking about the K family, but much interest in having visitors to her home upon whom she can lavish hospitality and with whom she can play cards or Scrabble late into the night. But Kay will persist in facilitating my interview with Annie. Pauline is a perfect stranger to me, but Kay will present me in such a light to Pauline, that interviewing her in Kay's kitchen is a marvelous series of warm-hearted discoveries, and not of two strangers talking.

Before our collective departure to the H family reunion in Saskatchewan, I invited Kay and Pauline over for dinner. Shortly after their arrival, Kay and Pauline presented me with a gift: "Dear, no. That wasn't necessary," I remonstrated. The gift was carefully wrapped in white tissue paper and scented with a good French soap. When I had peeled away enough of the tissue paper, I could see a fine wool challis shawl, more than a meter square. The background color was a deep eggplant purple, with satiny eggplant stripes woven into the fabric. Over the woven textile was printed an aqua-marine paisley pattern with a floral, red rose print over the paisley, all this parallel to the edges of the shawl. The surprising mix of colors and patterns could have been gaudy, and perhaps at one time were considered so, but to my eye they had an exuberance that would have attracted many a buyer.

"It was your great-grandmother [Annie] H's," Pauline said breathlessly. "I've kept it for years. Kay and I decided that you should be the one to have it." I was dumbstruck. Then Pauline and Kay went on to describe how carefully their mother Anna had kept the shawl in a trunk and how, on occasion, Anna had let her daughters handle the shawl, but only as a delicate and special object, not as a child's plaything. Anna's reverence for the shawl was transferred to her daughters. This was Annie's "good" shawl, carried from her village, Ulychno, and treasured as a connection to her and to her dimly perceived past. Making certain that I understood the importance and the symbolic nature of the shawl, Kay and Pauline went on to warn me never to store it in a plastic bag. The wool needed to breathe, but it also had to be kept from moths.

The K sisters' act of passing on a material object, the shawl, was echoed earlier by Katherine R, who off-handedly offered me her mother's distaff [*kuzhil'*], a simple, hand-carved object of every-day use.[2] At the time I received the distaff, I was somewhat frantically looking for an object of Ukrainian folk derivation on which to write a seminar paper and Katherine R brightly proposed the distaff. I had no idea that Katherine had a distaff. She seems to have held it in some regard, for she kept the distaff in a special place—in a large vase of huge Mexican paper flowers. Katherine has always been partial to Mexican-style colorful paper flowers. I presume that she gave me the distaff because she knew I was interested in it and appreciated its spiritual value.[3] Thus a shawl and a distaff speak to the reverence both the K family and the R family hold for certain material objects which remind them of their respective family identity.

As a group, the three K sisters whom I interviewed—Kay, Annie and Pauline, were inured, as children, to the traditions of their grandparents.[4] Indeed, Annie preferred life at her grandparents' home to life at her own. Her running away from the K home to Maksym and Annie H is recorded in the narratives of her sisters.[5] The sisters were absorbed into ritual observance at their grandparents' home. As we proceed, we shall see evidence of this.

Personal Narrative: Kay (Rite of Passage: Christening)

> 7 February 2005, pg. 4 and 17—Christening
> *MJ: This may have been before your time, but you know, your father, he kind of broke away from the one church that his in-laws attended and helped to found and build this other church. Was there ever any break in your going to services, from one church to another?*
>
> KM: No. This is kind of unique for that era, I'd say, because Mother was a very strong Catholic, you know. And Dad didn't, of course, agree with everything so he built his own church. O.K. So he got some of the other relatives into his church. But there was never any argument about where we're going to church. Now, for instance, there was so many of us kids. The Catholic church, you gotta baptize your child right away, quick. And sometimes Mother was unable and so Dad, we'd, he'd take us to his church.
>
> So half of us are baptized in the Catholic church and the other half are baptized in the [Ukrainian] Greek Orthodox church. So that's wonderful that there wasn't a rift. Because otherwise, I'm sure now-a-days, there'd be a divorce. If Mother was sick on Sundays or something and she couldn't go, and us kids always had to go, well we knew if we went with Dad, where we'd go. But there was never anything said. We just went to church. Mother said, 'I don't care where you go, as long as you go to church.' And that's the way it was....[Kay picks up her narrative about the christening of the K children some time later in the interview:]

> *MJ: Somewhere, I found this in a book, that your father actually had an older brother, who was not, like, a step-brother. There was an older brother, and there was your father and…*
>
> KM: …and there was a sister. I know that…He talked an awful lot about his sister, too. His sister's name was Kay, Katerina….So, I think I told you. 'Cause, you know, us kids were coming so fast and [they] had to get us baptized. So, I was named *Paraska* for two days. But Dad took me to be baptized in the Greek Orthodox church and he came home and I'm *Katerina*. [laughter]
>
> *MJ: [laughter] What did your mother say about that?*
>
> KM: [laughter] Well, Pauline is the next one. So she [Mother] still got it [to use the name—*Paraska*]. [laughter]

#####

In the preceding narrative, Kay lightly and light-heartedly touches upon the topic of christening. In the K family, according to Kay, it is assumed that each new baby will be "baptized" or christened in the appropriate manner at church. She does not go into the details of the actual ritual. In a sense, they are commonplace to her—"so many of us kids," so many christenings. Whether her mother attended the christening ceremony at church or not, Kay and her already-baptized siblings would be present with their father.

The salient point of Kay's narrative seems to be the spirit of accommodation each of Kay's parents, Anna and Andrew, demonstrates, that is, their flexibility, openness and respect for one another's belief system. Anna, like her parents, is a Ukrainian Catholic. Andrew has strong Orthodox leanings. Thus, when given an opportunity, Andrew has the infant of the moment christened in the small Orthodox church he has helped to found in Birmingham. The whole matter is quite *ad hoc.* If Anna is able to or plans to attend the christening, then it takes place in the Catholic church, a place of comfort and familiarity for Anna. If Anna is unable to attend the christening, Andrew whisks the infant and the rest of his brood to the Orthodox church. It would seem that for the K parents, it is the intent of the ritual, not its form, that is of utmost importance. Kay underscores this insight by speaking with her mother's voice: "Mother said, 'I don't care where you go, as long as you go to church.'"

But this is not all, for the second point of Kay's narrative suggests that somehow, things balance themselves out in the end. Her narrative captures the whimsical, somewhat wacky quality that she sees or wishes to communicate as existing in the large K family.[6] She relates how she has been given the name *Paraska*, but when carried to church by her father for christening, she is returned home with a different name, the name of her father's beloved sister, *Katerina*. Never mind though, for the next girl-infant in the K family is given the name *Paraska* (Pauline). Thus, both parents have a bit of what they want and have used a ritual, in part, to seal the deal. The K children are imprinted helplessly and lovingly by their parents.

In a sense, Kay minimizes the event of ritual christening among the Ks by focusing on the delicious humor of a family narrative that Kay herself was undoubtedly told. Yet, bringing an infant in to the Ukrainian-Canadian religious community was of obvious importance to Anna and Andrew.

Personal Narrative: Kay (Rite of Passage: Marriage) #1

25 July 2003, p. 1-3—Eldest sister's wedding
MJ: Do you remember Nellie's[7] wedding? Was there anything traditional in Nellie's wedding? Say, for example, this lovely scarf, shawl that you gave me, which I'm still overwhelmed by. [Originally the shawl of Annie H, Kay's and Pauline's grandmother and given by them, as a gift, to Monica.]

KM: I'm happy you got it.

MJ: Oh, it's just…I can't believe it. Well, at any rate, when Nellie was married, was there any sort of special ceremony over covering the head of the bride, or…

KM: No, no.

MJ: So you would say that her wedding was…

KM:…Traditional English.

MJ: Traditional English.

KM: She was married in the Greek Orthodox Church and then they came, everybody came to the house then, mother's house.

Pauline.[8] I don't remember that. [Pauline is 2 years younger than Kay. At the time of the wedding in 1929, Kay was 12 and Pauline was 10 years old.]

MJ: The food would have been Ukrainian, right?

KM: Oh, yeah. *Perohe* and all that. There's lots'a preparations and …

MJ: Do you know if your parents tied branches to the…

KM: Oh, outside, oh, yeah. On the trees. Yeah, yeah. They did do that.

MJ: Did that mean anything particular to them?

KM: It must have been. I don't know why they did it. I don't know. I never asked. So it must mean something.

MJ: Actually, it does.

KM: What does it mean?

MJ: It means that a wedding is going to take place and everybody in the neighborhood should come. It's like the invitation…instead of sending invitations. So they did that.

KM: It's funny, because when Rocky and I got married and Mom wanted me to come to Glendon, I said "no, no." And she said, "you're not gettin' married and [if] we're not going to be there." So, Rocky and I decided, well O.K., we'll get married in Edmonton at the church and we'll come to Glendon after we get married here. So we go to Glendon. And here's Dad, well in his eighties.[9] And he's got all these trees decorated…that's what made me think of it again…in the yard.

MJ: For heaven's sake. Well, well. That's really lovely. Do you remember the dancing? And the only reason I'm asking you about Nellie is because she was the oldest. She would have been closer to some of those Old Country traditions that might still have been maintained.

KM: No, there was dancing and, you know, sure they did some of the Ukrainian-type of dancing, like the *hopak*,[10] where they joined hands and cross their legs and squat, you know. There was that type of dancing. There was a mixture of everything.

#####

In part, because I ask her about rites of passage first, Kay speaks of marriage and funeral rituals. The wedding of her oldest sister, Nellie, on October 11, 1929 comes to mind. Very quickly she notes that it was "traditional English." Stated another way, Nellie's wedding was not a Ukrainian-Canadian wedding, the other kind of wedding Kay would have known as a girl. Kay is twelve years old when Nellie marries. But what constitutes "traditional English" in Kay's mind remains unclear.

Recollecting further, Kay allows that the food and dancing at the wedding are Ukrainian-Canadian—*pyrohy* and the *hopak*. And when asked for more detail, she realizes that her parents, indeed, tied green branches to fence posts or the gate or something else—"on the trees," she thinks [outside to signal and invite all the neighborhood to their daughter's wedding], which is a Ukrainian-Canadian marriage ritual gesture.[11]

Because the K family moved from Saskatchewan to Alberta in April 1928, and because Nellie's wedding took place in October 1929, the K family would still have been struggling to establish itself in a new community. The Glendon area in 1929 would have included other Ukrainian-Canadians, but none of these residents were close to the Ks in the way that the H clan would have been. We could speculate that if the wedding had taken place in the Birmingham, Saskatchewan area, the myriad H relations, most importantly Maksym and Annie, would have insisted on making a more traditional mark on Nellie's wedding festivities.

For her part, Nellie wears a lovely English-style dress for her wedding. There is no Ukrainian-Canadian wedding wreath [*vinok*], with its colorful ribbons. As for the welcoming branches, tied to trees, Kay does not know—as an adult, she does not know—why her parents went to the trouble of putting up these branches; it had never been explained to her.

Kay makes a connection between the welcoming branches for Nellie's wedding and her own wedding in 1956.[12] Her narrative glides from "Nellie as an example of a family wedding" to "me as an example of a family wedding." But rather than highlight what she wore, what the guests ate, the level of traditionality or non-traditionality, Kay is keenly aware of her parents' determination to be present at her exceedingly [from the parents' perspective] non-traditional wedding. Kay plans to marry Rocky in a simple church ceremony in the big city.

Kay is struck by the family feeling that is attendant to her wedding. "You're not getting married [if] we're not going to be there," her mother tells her. These are strong sentiments. Kay is touched by her mother's passionate outburst: "it's important to have your family present for a wedding," her mother is telling her. As the seventh child among ten and the middle daughter in a group of five, Kay's surprise at the depth of her mother's feeling is still palpable, forty-seven years later. Anna has made a clear statement of family identity: everyone is included.

As if to bring the point home further, Kay notes what happens when the newly married Kay and Rocky arrive in Glendon. Kay's septuagenarian father has put up green welcoming branches all over the trees in the yard, a throwback to earlier, traditional Ukrainian-Canadian weddings and a throwback to elder sister Nellie's wedding. Kay is surprised, even charmed. This ritual gesture is about vitality, vigor, spirit, and the insistence on honoring the old ways. And not only this. Her father has done this for *her*! She belongs to a family with roots in certain rituals, and her parents are still telling her this.

Personal Narrative: Kay (Rite of Passage: Marriage) #2

> 7 Feburary 2005, p. 9-10—Eldest sister's wedding
> ***MJ: You would have remembered, in the family it would have been Nellie's wedding you were present at. I don't know if you were present at Anne's wedding or Pauline's wedding.***
>
> KM: No. I remember Nellie's. They had a very small wedding. It was in the fall [October], I know that. And everything was done from the house. They went to church. We all went to church. Then everybody came to our place, had a great big feast. I don't remember any dancing. It was just…

MJ: Sometimes, traditionally, for a wedding, the men would build a dance floor outside that people could dance on, or sometimes the dancing would go on in a barn or a shed. But you don't…

KM: No. For Nellie, no. They had a very small wedding

MJ: Do you recall anything that was particularly Ukrainian, Ukrainian-Canadian, cultural for her wedding? Certainly the food was probably part [Ukrainian-Canadian]…

KM: Oh yeah. It was all Ukrainian food. Not really. I don't remember anything that was unusual.

MJ: Was there part of the ceremony when she would assume a scarf for her head, or anything that had to do with her hair…

KM: Well, she had a veil.

MJ: So she, that's right. She had a kind of traditional, white, oh no, she didn't.

KM: She didn't wear white. It was a color like this [Kay points to a peachy yellow, apricot color in the floral pattern of her living room couch.]. And Anne, again, she was rebellious from the word one. When she got married to Shorty, they went someplace to St. Paul. She got married and that was it. She came back married. [laughter]

MJ: [laughter] How did your parents react to that?

KM: [laughter] Oh, they didn't. [laughter] They didn't. But her attitude [was] take it or leave it. You know. They weren't very happy with it, but he was a good man. Of course, you know, a Ukrainian likes their daughters to marry a Ukrainian. And it's funny, because out of the five of us [K daughters], Nellie is the only one…

MJ: …who had a Ukrainian husband.

KM: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I know the boys [the K brothers] were kind'a different. It's funny, but that's the way it goes. The boys, I think, all of them married [women] of Ukrainian descent.

MJ: Were your parents more upset about the fact that Annie married a non-Ukrainian…

KM: Yeah.

MJ:… or that it was not a more traditional wedding celebration?

> KM: Well, mostly because it [he, Annie's beau, Shorty] wasn't Ukrainian to start with, and of course, no wedding, that was a no-no. But it didn't bother her [Annie]. So they got to like him [Shorty]. And I know, like even for me, they wanted me to have a great big wedding. And I said 'I don't want it.' I wanted them to meet Rocky first. And uh, so Dad kind'a fell in love with Rocky, But he's pulling himself back.
>
> And, of course, they wanted us to go to Glendon and get married in the church. And I said, 'No.' And Dad said, 'well, you're probably the last one who is going to get married in the family and I want you to be home on your wedding day.' And so Rocky and I talked about it and I said 'I'm not going to Glendon to get married.' So Dad said 'O.K. As long as you come home on your wedding day, I don't care.' So what we did, we got married at the United church in Edmonton, and [sister] Nellie and [Nellie's husband] Philip were our witnesses, then we went to Glendon.
>
> And, of course, we get to Glendon and here's balloons hanging, and you know that little house that they lived in. And oh gosh, they had a great big community, a dance and everything, and Dad was so happy. So, I was glad I did it. I really did it for them. So Rocky and I, I didn't want a great big wedding, neither did he. So we were in their good graces for the rest of their lives.

#####

In this second narrative, ostensibly about Nellie's wedding, Kay repeats much of what she has shared in an earlier narrative about the wedding—Nellie's wedding was modest, she wore a peach-colored dress, the food was Ukrainian-Canadian and most importantly, "…everybody came to our place, [and] had a great big feast." Although Kay no longer remembers whether there was dancing at the wedding of the eldest K family daughter, she does remember that the celebration embraced the community, in spite of the fact that the K family were still new-comers in Glendon.

Recollections of Nellie's wedding stir memories of her other sisters, Kay included, and their weddings. Yet, it is not so much the details of the various weddings that Kay captures, indeed, she may not have been present at the weddings of Annie or Pauline. Instead, Kay narrows in on the attitudes of Annie and herself with regard to parental pressure to have the sort of wedding their parents would like for their daughters, the two prerequisites of which would seem to be a Ukrainian-Canadian church marriage ceremony in Glendon and a big everyone-in-the-community-invited party. Annie, a rebel by nature, manages to circumvent her parents' desires for her by essentially eloping and with a non-Ukrainian-Canadian. Kay agrees to half of the parental demands and returns to Glendon for a party, and what a party they host for her. The suggestion is that everyone in Glendon has been invited to the wedding party.

A new detail comes to light. Balloons. From Kay's earlier wedding narrative, it would seem that Andrew decorated the yard of his Glendon home with cut saplings to greet the bride and groom and their wedding guests, a semi-traditional Ukrainian-Canadian gesture. But now we learn that he has placed balloons around to greet them as well. And thus, we glimpse a ritual improvisation (Myerhoff 1992: 131): if balloons—like cut green saplings— are a means to announce "welcome and celebrate," then balloons are fine. They perform the appropriate ritual function. The magical quality of the particular ritual gesture is retained, only the medium has changed.

Ultimately both of Kay's wedding narratives impart a deeply held belief in the importance of community—the K family, friends and neighbors, the Glendon religious community— in observing ritual. By joining with her parents, possibly other family members, and with Glendon friends, in other words, the community that had nurtured her, Kay [and her new husband] had done the ritually appropriate (correct) thing. Thus, she can conclude her narrative by stating, "So we were in their good graces for the rest of their lives."

Personal Narrative: Kay (Rite of Passage: Death) #1

Pauline is in the same room with Kay during our interview. Here and there, she interjects a comment.

> 25 July 2003, p. 7-8—Funeral of Grandmother H
> *MJ: When Pauline[13] was talking about, for instance, the funeral of the little child, you were kind of nodding your head. Do you remember any traditional rituals that were going on before or during that funeral? I'm trying to get a sense of ritual retention, what was left.*
>
> Kay: Yeah. When grandmother died [Annie H died on 5 October 1944. Kay was 27 years old.], I remember that. I was working already in the city. So Mother and

I went, caught the train and Grandmother's body was laid out in this little home [*khata*] that they [had lived in]...

MJ: In the velyka khata, the large room...?

Kay: Yes...and they had candles, four candles and when anybody, the ladies came, you know how they kind'a chant and cry, you know, almost...and they kept a vigil all night long, you never left the body by themselves. And then the day of the funeral, her [Annie's] sons carried the grave [the coffin] outside to where the road was. They carried that.

MJ: At any point did they raise and lower it?

Kay: Oh, yes. When they were leaving the house, didn't they raise [Kay is asking Pauline]?...and then when they got to the road, they raised it again. So I remember that.

Pauline: How did they get to the church?

Kay: Well, there was a hearse waiting outside. The boys carried it [the coffin], it must have been about half-a-mile or so to the road. The sons carried it. You followed it. And the ladies, you know how they chant and they cry—"*ioi, ioi, ioi, ioi, ioi, ioi.*"

MJ: Did you find the chanting...?

Pauline: I didn't, I was in Alaska at the time.
Kay: The chanting is...Did I find the chanting what?

MJ: How did it make you feel?

Kay: Depressed. It kind 'a made the hackles stand at the back of your neck.

Pauline: Well, that's what it's all about.

Kay: It's above a scream. It isn't a scream. It's kind of a moan, you know. That's what I remember about funerals.

MJ: Had you heard this type of chanting before?

Kay: No. Never. Never.

MJ: And these four women who chanted in this way, were they relatives? [MJ is confusing the number of candles with the number of women. We don't know how many women "chanters" there are.]

Kay: Oh, yeah. And the uncles, I don't know…

MJ: What did they say in this chanting?

Kay: I don't know….But, see mother and I came and it was the second day and I remember Harry [Uncle Harry H] was so distraught. Oh, he was his mother's darling. And I was kind of more concerned about Harry than I was about Grandmother.

Pauline: Well, who died first?

Kay: Grandfather [Maksym H, died on 21 July 1943]. But they had her in a little shawl, just, just… Mother was really, really very sad.

MJ: Well, she [Kay's mother, Anna] was the eldest daughter.

Kay: But after the funeral, everybody came to the house and had a big feast. And, of course, they sang these morbid [songs] and everybody had to have a drink. Just one drink. For, wasn't it to see that her soul got to Heaven or something like that?

MJ: That I don't know.

Kay: Well, that's what I remember about Grandmother [her funeral].

#####

Kay turns to the subject of a family funeral. Although she seems to remember funerals from her childhood, it is the funeral of her grandmother, Annie H that comes to Kay's mind.[14] She and her mother ride the train from Alberta, back to Birmingham, Saskatchewan. They return to find Grandmother H laid out in her *khata*, the three-room, log and mud cottage that Annie H has spent her life in and around.

The body of Annie was laid out according to Ukrainian-Canadian funerary ritual, her coffin on a bench in the *velyka khata* of Maksym and Annie's home.[15] Four lighted candles were placed around her. Women from the area, who knew ritual funerary chants, sat near Annie's body, keeping "a vigil all night long," and off and on keening presumably Ukrainian funerary chants. On the day of the burial, Annie's sons carried her coffin out of the *khata* and down the homestead road, raising and lowering the coffin at entryways and intersections of paths and roadways. They walked with the coffin to meet the hearse on the public road. All of this activity is traditionally part of Ukrainian-Canadian funerary ritual.[16] The pre-burial activities last for a prescribed number of days, three to be exact, and Kay is aware of this, for she mentions in her narrative that she and her mother have arrived on "the second day."

Kay quickly establishes herself as knowledgeable, for she indicates that everything [every gesture or act] means something. She pauses in the narrative to explain that "you never left the body by themselves." One wonders how she learned that this is the appropriate ritual rule. Kay describes the keening as "a chant and cry…above a scream…kind of a moan" and admits that "it kind'a made the hackles stand at the back of your neck." The keening is frightening and depressing to her. Nevertheless, she is struck by the power of it. The keening is what she remembers most about Annie's funeral.

Kay's narrative is characterized by contrasts that undoubtedly mirror her ambivalence at this rite of passage. The keening is jarring and leaves her shaken, but on the other hand, there is *Baba* [grandmother] Annie: "they had her in a little shawl, just, just…," she says. Kay's sentence is endearing. There is her dear grandmother, lovingly wrapped in a shawl, just as she'd worn a shawl daily, the symbol of her married status, all her life.[17] Kay grasps this image from life and holds on to it, communicating its importance. In a sense the shawl is a symbolic bridge that links everyday tradition—a married woman marked her status in public by wearing a shawl over her head— to the careful observance of this important rite of passage, Annie's funeral. Kay also pauses to note her own mother's feelings, that Anna K "was really, really very sad." Throughout her narrative, Kay is aware of the feelings of others, her mother, Uncle Harry, and she is solicitous. Hers is an inclusive mind. The Ks as a family are inclusive.

Kay returns to a description of the next ritual steps—after the funeral. She says, "Everybody came to the house and had a big feast. And, of course, they sang these morbid [songs] and everybody had to have a drink. Just one drink. For, wasn't it to see that her soul got to Heaven or something like that?" Kay is refreshingly critical here. She finds the post-funeral songs "morbid." And she expresses some amusement that liquid spirits are part of the ritual. She ends her narrative with a Socratic question: it requires no answer. Kay knows that the ritual toasts are certainly made to aid the departed soul's journey to Heaven.

Personal Narrative: Kay (Rite of Passage: Death) #2

7 February 2005, p. 6-9—Funeral of Grandmother H

KM: And like you were saying, about when somebody died,[18] O.K., uhmm, the way they did it then, they don't do it that way now, uhmm, somebody sat with the, with the corpse for three days. You know, 'til they were buried. The body was never left alone.

When grandmother [Annie H] died, 'cause I went back with mother, and uhmm, then the sons carried her casket out of the farm. They must have carried it, it's about a mile, 'til they got to the road. And of course, they had a high mass and a low mass.

MJ: Did someone sit with her, with her body, when...

KM: Well, somebody sat with her body all of the time. All the time. Yeah, because mum and I came by train and we arrived the day before she was going to be buried. So they had candles all around, praying. That's the way it was.

MJ: Was she laid out in her home?

KM: Uhmm huh. Uhmm huh. [Yes]

MJ: Do you remember if there were any special things that they did in her home that had to do with her passing away?

KM: Well, the priest came and he blessed the house and he blessed her. That's the only thing I know. And they dressed her in the costumes. Ukrainian *babkas* and, 'cause she always was that way. She always wore an apron.

MJ: Was she wearing it [in the casket]? And her head was covered?

KM: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

MJ: Do you know if they placed a sharp object anywhere in [the casket] or around or on her, like a needle, a knife or a pair of scissors.

KM: No. I don't know. Why? Is that a custom?

MJ: It is a custom in certain communities.

KM: Is that right?

MJ: Yes. It is felt that the deceased may need a sharp object to frighten away certain spirits.

KM: Oh.

MJ: I was just curious.

KM: No. It was very, again, everything was very holy. Very church-oriented. And I noticed that even now, when I go back [to visit the H family members in Saskatchewan], of course, I feel like a heathen. They're [the H family] very, still very church-oriented. Mum's family. They're very, very close to the church, which is good, which is good.

MJ: Do you recall if there was keening around the [deceased], when your grandmother passed away? Did anyone do the sort of ritual mourning?

KM: Oh yeah. Oh yeah. They kind of yelled, not yelled, but kind'a like '*ioi, ioi, ioi.*' And they cry and they bow, kind'a chant. It's a chant, I'd say. Yeah. Oh, yes, there's three women that were doing that.

MJ: When your own parents passed away, do you know if there was any keening then?

KM: No. Uhmm, the body was brought to the church the night before and Mum's and Dad's friends stayed up all night with the body and the service was the next day. That was the same thing with Dad. Somebody stayed right at the church.

MJ: Did people come into their home to view the body or…

KM: At Grandmother's? At Mother's?

MJ: At your mother's.

KM: Well, we didn't have the body at the house at all.

MJ: All right.

KM: We had a service the night before, you know, to view the body at the church.

MJ: Things had changed by then, I understand. It was different when your grandmother passed away. Then, her body was probably laid out…

KM: …it wasn't in a coffin.

MJ: Oh, it wasn't?

KM: No. No. No.

MJ: Where was the body?

KM: It was in their house. Well, there was a kitchen and a great big room [*velyka khata*?], they didn't have much furniture, of course. And they kind of made a pallet, and they put her body on there. Because, of course, again, who bought coffins in those days? So Grandpa and the boys made a coffin for her.[19] They built it. So, it's different then, than it is now.

MJ: Do you recall their house? When you walked in to the front door of the house, can you tell me about the layout?

KM: OK. You came in through the back and that was a great big kitchen with a table and then further up was their bedroom. And then this way, there was a great big room and there was beds in there, about six beds in there. And that's where Grandma was laid out. But, you know, they had those high stepped [thresholds], I forget what you call them, but it's Ukrainian, and before you stepped over it, when Grandmother was, when her body was there, you had to stop there and say a prayer, before you could go to view her body, to chase away the evil spirits.

MJ: And you weren't there for your grandfather's funeral, so he wouldn't [feature in this]?

KM: No. No. No.

MJ: Were there any other things like that, that you remember, that they did around her?

KM: Well, they lit, I know when I came here with Mother, there's all these candles and all these ladies chanting…

MJ: So there were a lot of candles.

KM: Oh, yes. There must've been about ten, twelve on each side and a big one on each side [of the body], a big one at her feet. And they just sat there and chanted and prayed. That's all I know. What else they did, I can't tell you.

MJ: No mirrors were turned against the wall?

KM: Yes. Yeah. Yes. Oh, yeah. Definitely. I didn't even think of that! [laughter]

MJ: [laughter] I shouldn't have said…

> KM: [laughter] Well, you just don't think of these things, 'cause it's been a long time and you just sort'a don't think of those things.
>
> *MJ: So, indeed, the mirrors were turned.*
>
> KM: Yes, definitely, every mirror in the house.

#####

In this second narrative about the funeral of her grandmother, which incidentally includes details of her parents' funerals, Kay again shows herself to be in command of the ritual content of a Ukrainian-Canadian funeral. She speaks clearly about the all-night vigil for the deceased, the lighted candles placed near and around the body, the importance of saying a prayer or ritual incantation at threshold crossings, the women who lament ritually—who keen for the family of the deceased. Moreover, Kay surprises herself by recalling, that for her grandmother's wake, the mirrors were turned to face the wall. She makes a distinction between funerals as they are "now" conducted and "the way they did it then." To be sure, Kay witnessed a change in funerary ritual between the deaths of her grandmother and those of her parents.

The center of Kay's narrative would seem to be that "everything was very holy. Very church-oriented" for the funerary rituals of Annie H and of Anna and Andrew K. By this, she infers that every aspect of their funerals had meaning for her, had religious meaning for her and was deeply connected to church practice. But then, Kay makes a distinction between an earlier self, mourning the losses of her grandmother and her parents, and herself "now." Comparing herself to her H cousins still in Saskatchewan , Kay finds herself less " church-oriented" than they. Of herself, by comparison, Kay says, "I feel like a heathen." Kay is hardly a "heathen." She is simply acknowledging that the ritual observance which once held sway among the K family and the H family—and the H family seems to have always been a bit more demonstrative about its ritual observance—has evolved and changed in intensity, for some more than for others.

Personal Narrative: Kay (Calendar Ritual: Miscellaneous) #1

25 February 2000, pg. 3—"They were very religious"
KM: When Granddad [Maksym H] came [to the Northwest Territory in Saskatchewan], they[20] lived in a hole [a *burdei*] in the ground.

MJ: And this was your mother's father. So they lived in a burdei.

KM: Yep, yup. They lived in a hole in the ground. They managed to get a cow…and she was right there. Then they got a few chickens…that's how they lived.

MJ: That's Maksym. Do you remember him at all?[21]

KM: Oh yeah. He used to play hop-scotch with us. Yes. We used to *love* going to Grandmother's place. They were little people. They weren't tall. Grandmother was about 5' and Grandpa was about 5'6". Very kind people. When we went there…they were very strong Catholics, very strong Catholics….

So when we used to go to Grandmother's, we always had to line up, say our prayers and then we could sleep with Grandmother and Grandfather. And they had great big…great big pillows, about like this [she gestures a shape of 2' X 2'].[22] That I remember. Yeah, they were very religious. …

#####

In speaking of her grandfather, in order to introduce him, Kay emphasizes that her H grandparents were "very strong Catholics, very strong Catholics." She lightly notes that when the H family came to the Northwest Territories they lived in a *burdei*, along with their chickens and their cow. What Kay doesn't mention is that also living in the *burdei* were 17-year old Anna, 14-year old Mike, 8-year old Theo, 6-year old Pearl, 3-year old Katie and 2-year old Metro. This would qualify the H family, among them Kay's mother, Anna, as one that had weathered true hardship. In Kay's narrative, the noting of the *burdei* experience functions to establish family identity. Kay is part of a people who survived such things: "Yep, yup. They lived in a hole in the ground. They managed to get a cow…and she was right there. Then they got a few chickens…that's how they lived," she says.

In the next breath, when asked if she remembers her grandfather at all, Kay tells us that "he used to play hop-scotch with us." It is a surprising revelation, for of all the things she remembers about Maksym, his playfulness comes to mind first.[22] After Maksym's playfulness, Kay lists his short stature and kindness, along with the self-same attributes for his wife, Annie. Ultimately, it is Maksym's religious faith that Kay fastens upon: "So when we used to go to Grandmother's, we always had to line up, say our prayers and then we could sleep with Grandmother and Grandfather." Thus, the grandparents imposed a ritual rule on their grandchildren: the recitation of evening prayers. The reward was, of course, closeness—physical and psychological closeness. As if to highlight the comforting quality of life near Maksym and Annie, Kay describes the pillows on their bed—"They had great big…great big pillows, about like this [gestures a shape of 2' X 2']. That I remember." What delicious comfort for a child, to be nestled among large pillows and loving grandparents.

Personal Narrative: Kay (Calendar Ritual: Miscellaneous) #2

25 July 2003, pg. 1—"Very religious"
MJ: …Now, you've heard me asking Pauline a little about… Are there any things that you remember about how your family [the Ks], not your grandparents, but the K's, how they would have celebrated any of the calendar holidays—Christmas, Easter, Iordan, any of that?

Kay: Well, yeah. Just like Pauline said. It was very religious, very religious.

MJ: So your lives were really focused…on the church…

Kay: …focused on family, relatives, family. You didn't need anyone else, because it was all family. You didn't need anyone else. They certainly kept up the traditions. Everything was…Christmas was holier-than-thou. And Easter, you know, you went to church with your basket. You never [eat]…like before Easter, you didn't eat, like from Good Friday…because, you know…

Pauline: Oh, yeah, the Lent.

Kay: Yeah, yeah. And the Lent.

#####

Three years later, in another interview in which she is asked how her own parents would have celebrated Ukrainian calendar rituals, Kay replies that Andrew and Anna's celebration "was very religious, very religious." Kay recalls having experienced an enveloping and self-sufficient family, or rather clan system, in which ritual celebration was carefully observed, the rules were followed, ritual fasting was practiced.[23]

Personal Narrative: Kay (Calendar Ritual: Miscellaneous) #3

> 7 February 2005, pp. 3-4—"Even on Sundays, it was a holiday."
> *MJ: Would you say that your parents were more-or-less diligent about observing various markers in the calendar? Or were there things that they, after a while or maybe even early on, they said, 'No, we really don't have time for?'*
>
> KM: No. No. Never. They *always* had time. They always. It was a holiday and that was it. Like even on Sundays, it was a holiday. Whether you went to church or not. Most of the time [we did go to church.] But you never did anything. You never did anything. You couldn't sit and sew. That was work. Sundays and holidays was made to visit back and forth, and to kind of relax.
>
> *MJ: How did they explain to you, as a child, why you didn't do things on these particular holidays? Did they make that clear to you?*
>
> KM: Well, they just said 'It's a holiday' and 'You just don't do that. You do that tomorrow, but not today. It's a holiday. You can play, but don't be too noisy.' You know, 'Subdue yourself'. Yup. It's a holiday and that's it. You know, and even to this day, sometimes, now-a-days you do everything on Sundays, I sit here and I think, 'Oh, my gosh! How times have changed.' They worked hard and it was a day of rest. I can see that. According to *The Bible*, you have seven days. Six days you work and the seventh day, you rest. So, I guess they were following that.
>
> *MJ: Did you look forward to occasions like Easter, in spite of the fact that you had to give things up for Lent? To fast.*
>
> KM: On yeah. It really meant something, you know. Once you overcome all these obstacles. You couldn't do this, you couldn't do this. So when the time came, oh my gosh, you can eat, you can dance. You know, because you couldn't do all that. So, you looked forward to the holiday in that respect. Like Easter, they'd have a great big dance at the hall, you know. And, oh boy, you'd just dance 'til you're blue in the face, because you haven't danced for a month [laughter].

#####

Kay compares her parents to those who carefully follow the tenets of *The Bible*. On the seventh day, they rested. Sunday was a day set aside for visiting "back and forth, and to kind of relax." Even sitting quietly and sewing was considered work and forbidden. The ritual observation of, for example, Easter was carefully enacted and in Kay's opinion, "It really meant something." The reluctantly embraced sacrifices of Lent contributed to the pleasure of Easter. Kay intimates that her teenage self, who gave up dancing for Lent,[24] was overjoyed with the arrival of Easter, for "oh boy, you'd just dance 'til you're blue in the face, because you haven't danced for a month." Thus, Kay stresses the reverence for and espousal of ritual observance in the K family.

In the following narratives, Kay outlines the encompassing nature of the K family's calendar ritual observance. Christmas, *Malanka*, *Iordan*, Easter and *Zeleni Sviata*. However, it is not so much the fine details of ritual enactment that Kay recalls, but rather her feelings and reactions to this enactment. We have ample evidence that ritual celebrations were closely observed by the K family, but in terms of narrative description, ritual seems to have been taken so for granted that, say, describing the steps to celebrate Christmas is simply unnotable, since everyone knows what they are.

Personal Narrative: Kay (Calendar Ritual: Christmas) #1

> 25 July 2003, p. 18-20—Christmas
> Pauline [sister Pauline speaks here]: No. No. We had nice…we had "Eaton's Beauty Doll," which is now considered, at those auctions that they show on T.V., they are the original "Madame Alexander" dolls. That's where…it was Eaton's. It was the "Beauty"…then they renamed it to "Madame Alexander Dolls," which are very expensive. We got such nice things for Christmas.
>
> Kay: Well, when you think of what you got, you know…you might have…I remember one year I got a little cat with a little bell…
>
> *MJ: A live cat?*
>
> Kay: No, a plush thing. Oh my gosh. I slept with that thing! It was so…you really appreciated what you got, because you got one toy and that was it. Oh, Christmas morning, Dad would have to go and do the chores. And you'd sit there and wait—"oh gosh, I wish"— and you're lookin' at this thing that's for you.

Pauline: But I will say, the boys, they got a steam engine. They'd get it going and it would "peep" and make noise and the steam would pop up and the men and everybody were on the floor…like the engine and a couple of cars. So the boys always got a little more expensive stuff, better.

MJ: Would your gifts be wrapped?

Pauline: Oh yeah, under the tree.

MJ: So at a certain point, you had a tree.

Kay: Oh, yeah. Oh, yes.

MJ: In Saskatchewan did you have a tree?

Kay: Well, we had a tree. But you remember what kind of a tree? [Kay directs her question to sister, Pauline.]

Pauline: German people celebrated their Christmas earlier, so we always got the German peoples' tree.

Kay: Because there was no Spruce trees around. Trees in Saskatchewan are at a premium.

MJ: Where would they get their tree?

Kay: Well, they bought it. They were a little richer. They only had two girls, Margaret and…

MJ: Do you remember…did you always have a tree? Or was there a time when you began having a tree…because it's very un-Ukrainian…
KM: No, we've always had a tree.

Pauline: You had a …our mother's…I think there was a time that all we had…what is it, a stook?.

Kay: A sheaf. A *didukh*.

MJ: A didukh. A sheaf [of wheat] in the corner.

Pauline: Yeah. Mother used to say, well, you're lucky (when I'd go to get the tree [along with younger brother, Alec]). If you don't get the tree, we'll just do that [have a sheaf]. Well, that took care of that.

Kay: Well at that time we were in Alberta and there were trees. But in Saskatchewan, no, we didn't have a tree until these German people offered. But otherwise, and at Grandfather's [Maksym and Annie's], there was never any tree…

Pauline and Kay: It was just a sheaf in the corner.

#####

As a child, Christmas was associated with gifts for Kay. Pauline, adds to this impression. It is Pauline who notes that "the boys always got a little more expensive stuff, better." Pauline remembers the toy steam engine that the boys received one year. We know from other accounts that there is a division of labor in the K family; the boys work outside doing the farm-related work and the girls work inside the house doing the house-keeping, cooking and sewing chores. On the rare occasion that Kay and Pauline are asked to help with stooking in the fields, they fail miserably and are only too delighted to be sent back to the house. They collectively relate this event with gales of laughter.[25]

Kay's noting the boys' heightened importance in the K family is a gentle criticism of the family hierarchy. Because, in Kay's mind, the boys are worth more to the farming operation, no doubt in terms of the muscle-power they provide, they get more expensive gifts for Christmas. The women and the girls are delegated to the work inside and around the house. Only at times of dire need among the Ks, are the women pressed into fieldwork, say, at harvest time. Pauline and Kay seem to be in concurrence over the labor ethic and gender division in the K family.

This edge between the K boys and the K girls is not a hard or a sharp edge. From the evidence of the narratives, they seem to have co-existed more-or-less peacefully with no major schisms.[26] It is notable that the siblings honored a pact in which no one tattled on a brother or sister and that they stuck up for one another (endnote 22). The girls acquiesced to the unstated division of labor and economic value. The fact that they mention it means that they were aware of it, of the inequity of it. But the introduction of the theme does not lead to a sense of rancor. And perhaps, part of the reason for its introduction is an understanding in retrospect, that there were real inequities.

To continue with her Christmas insights, Kay mentions that the family observed Christmas with a tree during her childhood days.[27] This is a surprising revelation. It would suggest that the Ks welcomed fluidity towards ritual observance. If their German neighbors offered a used evergreen tree, purchased at some expense, to celebrate a German Christmas,[28] the Ks, to the delight of their younger children, would take it, regardless of the ritual implications.

When asked where the German neighbors acquired their holiday spruce tree and keeping in mind the fact that these trees were rare in Saskatchewan, Kay responds that the Germans "bought it. They were a little richer. They only had two girls." Does she equate a family's having more money with its having fewer children? Quite possibly. There were six girls in Kay's family and five boys. There is a touch of longing in Kay's statement. Because the German family had only two girls, they could do more for them: they could provide them with special things such as a rare spruce tree for Christmas. However, Kay only hints at her feelings of deprivation. It is not a major chord in her melody.

Of course, the pressures of assimilation must be considered here. Undoubtedly Andrew and Anna K wanted to be accepted as Canadians and not as an ethnic minority, but accepting a Christmas tree from a German family is a private act which seems to have more to do with delighting the children than becoming an Anglo-Canadian. There is probably a little of everything in the gesture of collecting the tree: a desire to be western and "New Worldian," a desire for something slightly exotic and beautiful, a desire to cheer the children and to teach them other ways, and a desire to simply be neighborly—the Germans offered, so the Ks accepted.

From Kay's narratives, there is no sense of the K family's trying hard to acquire Anglo ways, not in its early days in Saskatchewan, at least. Nor were they trying hard to be Ukrainian nationals. They were trying simply to be themselves. The Ks were encircled by H family relations and largely validated by the more traditional H clan. The K children came into contact with Germans and Swedes in the community at school. To be sure, there was gradual assimilation. We see an eye for the contemporary and a desire to be successful in the environment and in the context of community, but this did not necessarily involve shedding a Ukrainian-Canadian identity. The Ukrainian-Canadian (Galician) Ks were simply one ethnic group among others in the Birmingham area.

It seems that some time after the pioneer hardship that Anna and Andrew K themselves weathered, a period just after their marriage when they saw the births of their first children, they were able to observe Christmas in a traditional Old World way. The Ks set a sheaf of wheat (*didukh*) in a corner of their *khata* and hay under the table. In her narrative, Kay says that her mother threatened her and her younger brother: "Mother used to say, 'well, you're lucky [when I'd go to get the tree along with my younger brother]. If you don't get the tree, we'll just do that [have a sheaf of wheat].' Well, that took care of that." In other words, at an earlier time, the K family "just did that." They celebrated Christmas in a traditional Ukrainian-Canadian manner with a sheaf of wheat in the house.

At a certain point, there must have been some family agreement that having a tree in the house was more wonderful for Christmas. Anna teases her children with this. In the youthful interchange with her mother, Kay's implication is that she and her younger brother prefer the German's tree in the house. They don't want to go back to the old days when there was [only] a sheaf of wheat. Once established in the Birmingham community, the Ks seemed not to be averse to trying new things. Whereas the grandparent generation of Maksym and Annie H, steadfastly maintained their traditional celebration of Christmas, Harry stands firm on this as does Kay who says, "but otherwise, and at Grandfather's, there was never any tree."

Personal Narrative: Kay (Calendar Ritual: Christmas) #2

25 July 2003, pg. 20—Christmas
Kay: Well, at Grandfather's, on Christmas Day, they brought a calf into the house.

> Pauline: And the whole house, I remember, at Grandmother's…was like a barn [made up to look like a barn]. Every room had hay in it. What it was, it was like Bethlehem. You know, the [Christ] child born in the hay.
>
> *MJ: Of course, this is tradition…but did they wait for the calf to poop?*
>
> Pauline: Yeah.
>
> Kay: Yup. It was good luck.
>
> Kay: Yup, we all waited for this to happen, Oh, yeah, at Grandfather's, everything was straw. Everything in the house. We used to just *love* going there, because at our house it [the straw] was [only] under the table.
>
> *MJ: And did you play in it?*
>
> Kay: Ohhhh. Throw it at each other! [laughter]
>
> Pauline: And nobody in those days…you were all stuffed up…and nobody had any idea that it was asthma or allergies! [laughter] You got a bad cold and that was it! And out came the ointment! [laughter]

#####

On the other hand, Kay and Pauline communicate their delight in the traditional Christmas of their grandparents. Maksym's and Annie's *khata* was made up to look like a barn; "every room had hay in it." A male calf was brought into the *khata* and only led out after it had defecated, this an act that symbolizes that the family will have good fortune. Kay knows this and states it. Very traditional.[29] What excitement there must have been for a child to experience a house filled with straw up to the level of approximately a half-meter. The opportunities for jumping into the straw and for tossing it about were endless. And indeed, Kay says, "we used to just *love* going there, because at our house it [the straw] was [only] under the table." To a child this must have been a poor showing, when compared to the grandparents' straw-filled home.

There is a sense of joy and of belonging to something, of being allowed to be a child. Play and high-jinks were a part of life, particularly at Maksym and Annie's. There is no sense of shame, no trying to hide the fact that a calf was brought into a house and breathlessly observed until it pooped. For an Anglo-Canadian at the time, this ritual gesture would undoubtedly be looked at askance. But with the mostly accepting Hs as neighbors, there was no one to censure Ukrainian-Canadian Christmas practices. For a child, these practices must have been magical, interesting and fun. Maksym and Annie were very reverent about all of these practices, so the K children would have absorbed their reverence and respected it. In her narrative, Kay quickly explains that the calf's pooping "was good luck." So the children knew the meaning of certain ritual acts/gestures. There was enough information coming from the adults that the children could be knowledgeable about various rituals and identify with them.

Personal Narrative: Kay (Calendar Ritual: Christmas) #3

7 February 2005, pg. 1—Christmas
MJ: Can you tell me a little bit about how you and your family, when you were a young girl, how you celebrated Christmas? What kinds of things you did for Christmas?

KM: O.K. We did not celebrate December the 25th. We didn't work, but it wasn't the same as the eve of January 6th. Now Mum would prepare the twelve dishes. Ah, it was a very holy affair. And ah, the kids would be standing outside looking for the first star and Dad would say that he'd have to go feed the cattle because it's Christmas Eve.[30] We'd all sit down and dad would lead us in a Ukrainian Christmas carol and then we'd have a twelve-course dinner. And it would take us two, three hours to get through…

MJ: …the whole twelve-course dinner.

KM: Yup.

MJ: Did your mother fix kutia? The wheat?

KM: Oh yes, everything. That was the first dish. There was always a sheaf of wheat in the corner and a bowl of wheat underneath that, that was for, that was so your crops prosper for the year, or something. And we'd sit and we'd eat for two, three hours and after that, sometimes there was a church service. Sometimes it wasn't 'til morning. So, if there was a church service: everybody dressed up and away we went to church. Or else, it would be the following day.

Now Christmas was not like it is today, where you receive presents upon presents. If you got one little thing that probably cost about fifteen cents or twenty-five cents, you were elated. And you got an orange, an apple and peanuts, a little bag.

> And that was it. And we were so happy to get that. That's the way Christmas was at my Mother's place.
>
> *MJ: Do you remember, on occasion would you celebrate Christmas with your grandparents, the Hs, Maksym and Annie?*
>
> KM: I don't recall. Although, I do recall, I shouldn't say 'I don't.' What stands out in my mind, is, we'd go, Mother would bundle us all up, Dad with his sleigh and blankets, and [heated] rocks, you know, to keep the kids warm, and we'd get there and Grandmother would have the twelve dishes too. But what I remember most of all, the whole house was like the inside of a barn. There was hay all over the house, to signify that Jesus was born. I remember that. The same type of tradition.

#####

In the preceding narrative regarding the K family's observation of Christmas, it is the reverence of the family's celebration that Kay chooses to emphasize, as well as her grandparents' somewhat extraordinary—"the whole house"— ritual performance. Without going into specifics, Kay enumerates how the K children search for the first star of Christmas Eve; how her father feeds the cattle and then leads the family in a carol; how a sheaf of wheat stands in the corner of the room; how, with *kutia* as the first dish, the family dines on twelve [meatless] dishes. Perhaps by the time of the third interview, from which this narrative is transcribed, Kay assumes my familiarity with various Ukrainian-Canadian calendar rituals and thus, does not feel compelled to explicate such shorthand statements as "Dad would say that he'd have to go feed the cattle because it's Christmas Eve."[31] Or perhaps, Kay simply assumes that such ritual activity carries a common-knowledge component, as something second-nature to oneself, not requiring further explanation. Regardless, she refrains from an engaged discussion of detail, for to say that Christmas Eve "was a very holy affair" is the essential particular of her narrative. No more need be said.

Personal Narrative: Kay (Calendar Ritual: *Malanka or Christmas caroling*) #1

> 25 July 2003, pg. 4-5—*Malanka or Christmas caroling*[32]
> *MJ: Now do you indeed know that after Christmas there was a little Malanka*[33] *celebration? Can you in your mind separate the caroling for Christmas from the caroling for Malanka?*

Kay: The *Malanka*? Where they go to house to house? Oh, yeah. They did it in Glendon.

MJ: In Glendon [Alberta]. Did they do it in Saskatchewan though?

Kay: I think they did.

Pauline: Oh yes they did. Because sometimes they came to the house two, three blocks away.

Kay: I'm sure they did.

MJ: Do you know if there were characters…?

Kay: Oh, there was a devil. 'Cause we were really scared…there was a devil, but we were so scared, we ran.

Pauline: Oh, I knew there was something I was scared of!

Kay: But we were so scared, we just ran upstairs[34] and hid. Nobody explained to us [that this devil was merely a neighbor in costume]…like they should. Nowadays…

MJ: How old would you have been?

Kay: When we left Saskatchewan? Pauline was four, so I must have been six.[35]

MJ: So your Malanka memories would have been from when you were five or six.[36]

Kay: Yeah, yeah. But all I know, is like Pauline says, I was frightened. 'Cause these guys would come in and jump around…

Pauline: They'd clown around…and now I remember that devil. Red.
He had a tail. Horns.

Kay: Yes. So they did celebrate that. …[*Malanka*].

#####

This particular narrative, although communicating the connectedness of the K family to ritual celebration in their community, is somewhat tainted by leading questions and by confusion on the interviewer's part. In Saskatchewan, *Malanka* or something akin to mummery was observed by Kay and Pauline as children in the Birmingham area, from approximately 1923 to 1927. Each of them makes a reference to characters dressed in costumes who sent them scurrying for cover. And each is clear that her recollections come from the days before they moved to Alberta. The girls were genuinely frightened by a costumed person(s), who came to the door and was invited into the house. Kay says, "we were so scared, we ran....we were so scared, we just ran upstairs and hid. Nobody explained to us...like they should."

We will see in the following chapter that Pauline remembers men "dressed up as Wisemen" with white beards and canes, coming into the house and singing carols. Kay remembers a devil. However, Kay is much more familiar with revived *Malanka* celebrations, held annually in Glendon and near-by Bonnyville.[37] Furthermore, because in actuality, Kay's interview follows Pauline's, because she has heard what her sister has already said, and because both Kay and Pauline agree on having been scared by costumed-adults, Kay could creatively suggest that what scared her must have been "a devil," since a devil-figure would frighten most children. Given the fact that Pauline spontaneously recalls Wisemen as carolers after Christmas Eve in Birmingham, it is entirely possible that the sisters witnessed costumed Christmas carolers singing *koliady*.

Be that as it may, the children were unprepared for adult-sized outlandish characters jumping around inside the house. They were outsiders with the seemingly more adult, *Malanka* or Christmas caroling tradition. Kay essentially faults her elders for not protecting her against the fear she experienced. Perhaps with the mummers, there was a bit of fun at the children's expense. Or the adults were simply oblivious to the children's anguish. Kay's critique of her parents' behavior indicates that, as a child, she was accustomed to being protected and informed in some way by the adults around her. In the arena of mummery, she is disappointed by the adults. The admission stands out as a rarity in her narratives, because, for the most part as a child, Kay experiences inclusion and protection, not neglect.

Personal Narrative: Kay (Calendar Ritual: *Malanka* or Christmas caroling) #2

7 February 2005, pg. 12-13—*Malanka* or caroling

MJ: In an earlier interview, you were talking a little bit about life in Saskatchewan [before 1928] and you had suggested that in Saskatchewan you had, after Christmas or around New Year's there would be these characters who would come dressed up in costume and would scare you to death.

KM: Oh yes, well that's for, is it for *Malanka* or something?

MJ: It could be. I'm not really certain, but it depends upon what time of year, but from your description it seems perhaps…

KM: Yes, they used to come and…

MJ:…and this is when you were a child?

KM: Yes. They used to come, with masks, and they'd throw wheat around the house to bless, but they'd be dressed as devils and different kind of people, but I don't know what that means. I don't know whether they still do it…

MJ: It was a sort of celebration of New Years. The idea was kind of the death of the old year and the birth of the new year. And it was usually a group of men…

KM: Oh, is that what it is. Yes, it was men.

MJ:…who would usually dress in drag. Who would dress like women.

KM: Yeah. Yeah. Yes.

MJ: The idea was reversal, a reversal of roles. It would be a gay, humorous type thing. And usually among them, there would be a goat. Do you actually remember seeing something like that?

KM: I just kind of faintly remember, because we were so scared. You know, and I remember one guy, he had like a pitchfork reversed. And he had a Ukrainian costume and he had whiskers. And one was a goat. But we were so scared that we ran away and Mum just let us run.

#####

This second narrative about costumed characters who come to the K home or to the home of Maksym and Annie while the young sisters are present is as suspect as the first "*Malanka*" narrative. There is no question that Kay recalls mummers in masks, but it is impossible to determine what memories come from Kay's childhood in Birmingham and what "memories" come from more recent knowledge of *Malanka* festivities in Glendon, Bonnyville or even Edmonton where Kay reads the newspapers. And because I ask her leading questions, describing activities that take place around *Malanka*, for example, I tell Kay that there would be a goat-character accompanying *Malanka*, Kay receives clues that help her describe *Malanka*, but do not help her reach for Christmas season in Birmingham recollections.

Personal Narrative: Kay (Calendar Ritual: *Iordan*) #1

25 July 2003, p. 5-6—*Iordan*
Kay: And that *Iordan*, that Holy Water bit. I know that. [Pauline is fixing hot tea in the background: "Do you take cream and sugar?"…] Because there was always a basin of water, of Holy Water, from the year before, and we'd all wash our face in that water.

Pauline: There was a dime in it.

Kay: Yeah.

MJ: Was there anything else in it? Not an egg?

Kay: No, just the Holy Water.

MJ: So there was Holy Water and the dime…

Pauline: …For prosperity.

MJ: But there was no Easter egg that was broken up [and in the water]

Kay: No, no, no.

MJ: In the Old Country what they would do is they would have a religious procession to the lake or the stream and they would cut out of ice a cross, and have a service outside. They didn't do that in Saskatchewan, did they?

Kay: No, no. But that Holy Water was kept in mother's bedroom, you remember where mother kept that Holy Water in that…

Pauline: My father's jug of water.

Kay: [laughs]

> *MJ: Where did she keep the Holy Water?*
>
> Kay: In her bedroom and they had one of those old-fashioned dresser-closets things and it was at the bottom there. We never touched it. We were not allowed…
>
> *MJ: Did she use it in anyway during the year?*
>
> Kay: Well, if one of the kids got sick.
>
> *MJ: Then would the child be asked to drink the water or …*
>
> Kay: It depends on how sick you were. We'd get a sickness where we were really sick, or else.

#####

When Kay brings up the family's observance of *Iordan*—the Blessing of the Waters on the 19th of January, one of the points of her narrative is that the Holy Water, blessed at the *Iordan* religious service, was used medicinally to take care of the children. The K children were taught to respect the Holy Water, they were taught not to take the jug that the water was stored in lightly. The parental injunctions around the jug of Holy Water still seem to reverberate; both Kay and Pauline remember exactly where and how the Holy Water was stored and that they were to leave it untouched.

Although Kay does not recall the details of the K family's *Iordan* observance, that is, who went to church and what form the Blessing of the Waters took, she clearly knows the meaning of the newly blessed water, brought home fresh and lightly splashed on. To celebrate *Iordan*, each member of the K family would wash his or her face in the basin of Holy Water. The basin also contained a dime "for prosperity," Kay and Pauline say. Thus, they know that the Holy Water is connected to wishes for prosperity and for good health, and that seems to be enough. Because their elders, parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts, have presented the calendar and rite of passage rituals as an organic part of their lives, the K girls do so as well. It is a simple, generational pass-forward.

Personal Narrative: Kay (Calendar Ritual: *Iordan*) #2

7 February 2005, pg. 3—*Iordan*
MJ: Do you recall if your family observed Iordan, the blessing of the water?

KM: Oh yeah. Oh yeah. Oh yes. Mother saved the water from every year, from the year before. And in the morning she had a basin of water and we all washed our faces in that water, on *Iordan*. Yup, so that was very holy water.

MJ: Did she ever use it medicinally for you?

KM: Oh yeah. If us kids got colds or…she'd put a little honey in there, in the [blessed] water. Yup, so, I think psychologically, because we thought it was so holy, we mended [laughter].

#####

With some humor, Kay stresses the sustaining belief that she and her siblings held for the healing properties of *Iordan* blessed water. Whether the water possessed healing properties or not, the K family had faith that it did, and thus they were "psychologically" disposed to get better when blessed water was administered as a healing agent. Undoubtedly, there is much truth in Kay's insight. Certainly, she conveys a wholehearted and unquestioning acceptance of ritual magic among the Ks.

Personal Narrative: Kay (Calendar Ritual: Easter) #1

25 July 2003, pg. 3—Easter
MJ: Did you have…I'm jumping back to the idea of calendar holidays…was there a time of year that you really, really looked forward to in terms of celebrating something?

Kay: Every holiday! Every holiday because it meant you either got a new *kapeliuk* [hat] or … [laughter]

Pauline: I can remember having such beautiful clothes for Easter. Oh, my sister [Nellie] would make ruffles and…

Kay: Yes, every holiday was new clothes.

#####

Kay glosses over Easter by lumping it with all of the other religious holidays. Both she and Pauline are in agreement, that Easter, like Christmas or *Iordan* or *Zeleni Sviata*, involved new, pretty clothes and that everyone looked forward to these holidays with excitement. A holiday among the Ks meant visiting neighbors and family and being visited by neighbors and family. Ritual breads may have been baked, eggs written and exchanged, the house thoroughly cleaned, the Easter basket filled with prescribed food items and taken to the church to be blessed. Kay recalls the excitement generated by a religious holiday and that she and her siblings doubtless received something special for themselves, say, "a new *kapeliuk*."

Personal Narrative: Kay (Calendar Ritual: Easter) #2

> 25 July 2003, p. 23—Easter Moonshine-making
> Kay: Do you remember when Dad was going to make moonshine for Christmas? [laughter] Oh, my...
>
> Pauline: I remember Easter…with the moonshine. Good Friday, we all had to fast. All Good Friday, no butter, no cream…and all you could eat was fish… and that, but Father would hang all these blankets on the, in that shack window…that's when he did his moonshine
>
> Kay: No this was for Christmas. You know we had that old house and it had a chimney, so therefore, he put this brew by the chimney. But all us kids were sworn to secrecy.
>
> Pauline: Yeah, we were not allowed to let anybody in…
>
> Kay: …because Dad is making moonshine. [laughter] And so, I remember this vividly. We're sittin' in the kitchen, of course, where else would we sit? A strange car comes in the driveway. And Dad runs upstairs…and throws this mash [out]. It was somebody that was lost! [laughter] And he threw all his mash!
>
> Pauline: I was gone already. But I remember the Good Fridays…it wasn't Good Friday for him. He was crocked by the time! Two o'clock! Because every batch that came up, you had to taste and he'd be so damn drunk on Good Friday! That the rest of us are fasting!

#####

And then there was moonshine. Kay seems to recall moonshine at Christmas; whereas Pauline clearly recalls it at Easter, on Good Friday to be specific. Perhaps it is safest to say that moonshine is related to major calendar rituals—Christmas or Easter— by the K family. The two sisters concur in looking back with amusement. The K family is fasting before Easter. Pauline says, "no butter, no cream…and all you could eat was fish." They are following the Lenten tradition of fasting. But their father is working on his batch of moonshine. The whole family is fasting, meanwhile, Andrew K is tasting the batches of moonshine, As Pauline recalls, "It wasn't Good Friday for him [father]. He was crocked by the time! Two o-clock! Because every batch that came up, you had to taste and he'd be so damn drunk on Good Friday!" The two sisters laugh, recalling the time that the batch of moonshine was tossed out. Their father, fearing an official raid, acted hastily when, in fact, a driver, simply lost on a country road pulled into the K yard to ask for directions.

"All us kids were sworn to secrecy," Kay says. And although we sense censure in Pauline's voice—the rest of the family is fasting and father is getting drunk, the overall sense is one of amused tolerance. Everyone was in on the "secret" of moonshine-making. The children were complicit and a part of the adult activity in the sense of having to keep the "secret." This, doubtless, added excitement to the atmosphere and sealed the bond among family members and between parents and children. And in retrospect, Kay and Pauline are endeared to their father's "let's celebrate" attitude in the face of the solemn Good Friday, and to his vulnerability and naivete in the face of a lost motorist. A time of penitent seriousness in the ritual calendar cycle, Good Friday, brings to mind amusement for Kay and Pauline. Their laughter around Andrew's activity is warm-hearted and full-bellied.

Personal Narrative: Kay (Calendar Ritual: Easter) #3

> 7 February 2005, p. 23—Easter
> KM: And, of course, Easter was very, very holy. I mean, Grandfather and Grandmother, that's forty days of Lent. Well, they ate very sparingly. Very. No meat. They drank milk, but. For us kids, when we were growing up, it meant you couldn't go out to parties, you couldn't dance. Oh my goodness, that was a sin. You'd get your legs broken off [laughter]. And of course, from Good Friday, OK, you didn't eat very much either. Mum would have maybe a little bit of fish, but no meat, you didn't eat too much.

MJ: Did your parents also fast for Lent?

KM: Oh, yeah.

MJ: They didn't eat a lot either.

KM: No. And then, of course, then on Easter Sunday, you went to church with your basket, you know. You got it blessed and then you came home with all your kids.[38] And they took that egg, one egg, and you break it up [for] as many people as you have, and each one has a little piece of that blessed egg.

MJ: And is the egg, is it…colored?

KM: A colored egg, yes. A colored Easter egg that has been blessed.

MJ: Is it highly ornate?

KM: No. No. No. No. No. Just a colored egg.

MJ: Do you know what the color was? Was it a specific color?

KM: Well, Mum, it was always kind'a red or something, you know…So, again, you ate what was in that basket, for Easter morning.

MJ: Did your mother inscribe pysanky? The Easter eggs, did she draw them?

KM: Uh huh.

MJ: Did you and your sisters help her?

KM: I was a klutz. Nellie, sister Nellie, she was really good. Anne was good. As they grew up, yeah, they were very good. Very good. But again, it depends which village you were from, you know, because Mum's was from whatever village she came from and it was kind of rough-looking. But then when Nellie and Anne came along, they picked up from other people, you know, and became better at it.

#####

In the context of emphasizing the "very holy" nature of Easter for the K family and the grandparents, Kay introduces a new detail to her portrait of the family's ritual observance: *krashanky*. The solid-color (possibly red and definitely cooked) egg is broken into as many pieces as there are Easter celebrants in the home and each eats his bit of blessed egg. All this would have taken place after the family returned home from the Easter church service at which their food basket, which included *krashanky*, was blessed. And when asked, Kay notes, somewhat self-consciously, that her mother created decorated eggs (*pysanky*) for Easter. But Kay considered these to be of simple design, "rough-looking" when compared to the ornate (intricately designed) eggs that her more-adept sisters ultimately learned to inscribe.

Kay attributes her mother's "rough" decorative style of egg inscription to the ancestral village and to that village's design imperatives. It is indeed a fact that *pysanky* design in the Old Country had regional variations and that some patterns and color combinations were inspired by gifted village *pysanka* makers and copied by others in that village. But here, Kay seems to be softening an unvoiced judgment made against her mother's "rough" design style, in other words, "Mother made her designs the way she did because this is the way they did them in her village. It was not a matter of Mother's inability." Highly decorated *pysanky* have come to be the standard of excellence for a *pysanka* today, but in truth, there is no better or worse among decorated eggs.

Personal Narrative: Kay (Calendar Ritual: *Zeleni Sviata*) #1

> 25 July 2003, pg. 3—Green Holidays and *Petra*
> KM: ...Yeah, every holiday, [you] looked forward to... and each one.... Like Green Holidays, you looked forward to a, not Green Holidays, *Petra*. That was really something, because you went to another church. They would have a *khram*. They would have a *khram* there. We'd get all tissied up and away we'd go. And we'd go to that church and we'd have *khram* and we'd stay there with all our frills, you know. And Green Holidays, it was again: your house was swept and floors painted and everything was washed down.[39]

#####

Zeleni Sviata and *Petra*, which Kay clearly remembers as calendar rituals with indistinct features, they fall under the rubric of "holiday." She says, "Like Green Holidays [*Zeleni Sviata*], you looked forward to ...*Petra* (the day honoring Saints Peter and Paul).[40] That [*Petra*] was really something, because you went to another church. They would have a *khram.*" Kay's confusion and joyful association with *Zeleni Sviata* and *Petra* was that these were specially marked days during which the Ks, all tidied up, opened their doors to their neighbors or traveled to their neighbors' churches, feasted and visited.

Personal Narrative: Kay (Calendar Ritual: *Zeleni Sviata*) #2

> 25 July 2003, pg. 9—*Zeleni Sviata*
> *MJ: And Zeleni Sviata?*
>
> KM: Oh now. [laughter] As Pauline says, "those two trees." And again the house was so…[PS: so party (festive)] and the walls washed and all the bedding changed, and of course, and again, you got something new and it had to end with church and you either got company or else you were invited out to somebody's place. And if you're gettin' company…There's ten of us. One would be bakin' cookies, another would be making pies… [laughter].

#####

For *Zeleni Sviata*, Kay notes "those two trees." The sisters laugh, remembering the two trees tied to a gatepost outside to mark *Zeleni Sviata*. Kay continues, "And again the house was so,"… [Pauline interrupts] 'so party'…" and … it had to end with church and you either got company or else you were invited out to somebody's place." Somehow the idea of celebration and community is tantamount to the calendar rituals that Kay recalls.

Personal Narrative: Kay (Calendar Ritual: *Zeleni Sviata*) #3

> 7 February 2005, pg. 2—*Zeleni Sviata*
> *MJ: What were some of the other calendar events that your family would celebrate?*
>
> KM: Well, there's *Petra*, there's Green Holidays, *Zeleni Sviata*…
>
> *MJ: Can you tell me a little bit about Green Holidays, how you might…*
>
> KM: Oh, yes. That signifies spring is here. Right. And so, that meant you cleaned your house from stem to stern. And also, they always planted two trees, 'cause it would be springtime, in front of the house.
>
> *MJ: Did they actually plant them in the ground?*

> KM: Yeah.
>
> *MJ: Or did they cut them and tie them to something?*
>
> KM: No, they planted them. They planted them. Every Green Holidays. That was a ritual. And naturally you ended up going to church. And there would always be a big banquet at somebody's place. So, that was a ritual. And the same thing with *Petra*. That's July. Well again, you always had to have a new hat or something. Everything was church-motivated.

#####

Zeleni Sviata is associated with spring in Kay's mind and with "two trees" that would be planted in front of the house.[41] Thus, here and there, Kay reveals that specific ritual activity, appropriate to the occasion, is taking place in concert with the "naturally you ended up going to church."

Concluding remarks on Kay's personal narratives

Kay seems to make clear that the K family observed calendar and rite of passage rituals, if not to the letter, then in spirit. From Kay's narratives we can observe that the Ks passed on to their children a regard for ritual, for its form and its meaning, and an acceptance of their Ukrainian-Canadian ritual heritage. For the first twenty years of the K family's life together, they had the example of grandparents Maksym and Annie, the grandparents' insistence on ritual observance, which was connected to their profound religious belief. It would seem that Maksym and Annie led the way for all to follow, by virtue of their exemplary lives; they held the line on the rules of ritual propriety, with kindness, warmth and humor. Who could possibly resist? The K siblings simply adored the way Maksym and Annie revered calendar events, such as Christmas. And if their parents were more restrained in following certain ritual steps, the K siblings had the example of both grandparents and parents from which to learn and model their own ritual activity and belief. In general, the K family seems to have absorbed and accepted what Maksym and Annie did, later doctrinal issues notwithstanding, such as Catholic versus Orthodox services.

Kay's wedding narratives pivot on the point of family connection and inclusion. Ritual details are less clear, that is, Kay does not describe either her sister's wedding or her own terribly closely. She does communicate that there were Ukrainian-Canadian elements in both weddings. What Kay seems to reveal about family identity with these rite of passage narratives is that the ritual, as a vehicle for reaffirming bonds within the family group, was enacted with its interior spirit intact.

Kay's funeral narratives, which recall her grandmother's death, reveal the extent to which Kay has internalized the steps of this rite of passage ritual. She is entirely aware of the outward form of Ukrainian-Canadian funerary ritual—the body dressed and laid out in the *velyka khata*, the burning candle(s), the ritual mourners who keen and keep an all-night vigil over the body, the manner in which the body is carried from the *khata* to the cemetery, the funeral dinner after the burial. Kay notes all of this in her narratives, but rather than concentrate on the segments of the funerary ritual, Kay allows the ritual activity to wash over her and heighten her awareness of the group around her and the psychological landscape. Her coeval uncle, Harry, is struggling with his mother's death. And Kay's mother, she notes, is "really, really very sad." Kay's narrative presents the extended family group bound together by their grief and by the ritual.

Nevertheless, Kay questions some of the activity that takes place in the context of the funeral ritual. The "morbid songs" sung at Annie's funeral dinner and the drinking of spirits "to see that her soul got to Heaven" do not sit well with Kay. She is not an uncritical participant. There is a sense that the K family identity is, in part, based on ritual reverence, yet there is some leeway in this. They do not take themselves entirely seriously.

This free-wheeling and humor-bound quality is more obvious in the area of calendar ritual observance. Christmas, *Iordan*, Easter were all highly religious events for the K family according to Kay. She notes that "Christmas was holier-than-thou. And Easter, you know, you went to church with your basket." Strict fasting before Easter Sunday was the rule. Yet, for Christmas, certainly in Kay's youth, a rather un-traditional tree was welcomed into the house. And playing in the hay spread throughout Maksym's and Annie's *khata* was a high-point. Moonshine making at either Christmas or Easter is introduced, somewhat collectively by Kay and sister Pauline, in a descriptive narrative full of humor. The calendar observances were, in Kay's words, "focused on family, relatives, family. You didn't need anyone else, because it was all family." And of course, in Saskatchewan, this was primarily true, for the K family lived with the H family relations all around them. Calendar rituals such as *Zeleni Sviata*, *Petra* and *khrams* hosted by various local church communities were all occasions for bustling work and fun. As Kay explains, "We'd get all tissied up and away we'd go. And we'd go to that church and we'd have *khram* and we'd stay there with all our frills." And again, with respect to *Zeleni Sviata*, she adds, "the walls [of the house were] washed and all the bedding changed and of course, and again, you got something new and it had to end with church and you either got company or else you were invited out to somebody's place." However, whether or not calendar rituals were approached with such delightful exuberance among the Ks is not the point. The point is how, in Kay's narrative, K family identity expressed itself as a spirited embracing of Ukrainian-Canadian ritual that was community-based. No one seems to have been left out. Ritual belief is implicit, internal and accepted.

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[1] In a fine example of Kay's humor and her poking fun at herself, she tells the story about the money she received as a child for selling fresh cream. Kay says, "Mum decided that the cream check…you know, you separate [the cream] and then you put it down the well [to keep it cool]…this routine. Well, each one of us [K children], you must remember, you got the cream check, like this week it would be yours and the next week it would be mine. Then you'd go to the [Eaton's mail-order] catalog…and when it was my turn [for the cream check]…you sold the cream and then you'd get the check… And they had written: 'Mouse found in cream'. [laughter] ….

I had to do without. Can you imagine! [The check was essentially void.] That's what you call 'luck'. Finally, it came my turn to have the cream check again and I remember it was $2.50. O.K. $2.50 of course. The [Eaton's] catalog. I bought a hat—I know exactly what it was made of: it was straw—and a jacket. $2.50 for both. And it [a green jacket] was one of these rubbery things, you know. And there was a picnic at Maloy. I was dressed in this hat and this jacket. And it was 90 [degrees Fahrenheit] above [+29C], but I wasn't going to take this jacket off! [laughter] Oh, I came home, my back with welts…about this big, you know, from the rubber. [raucous laughter]…So, I remember my first check…and to this day, I hate green."
Interview with Kay K, 25 July 2003, Edmonton, AB, p. 14.

[2] A distaff is a staff used "for holding the bunch of flax, tow, or wool from which thread is drawn in spinning by hand or with the spinning wheel" (*Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged*, 1991: 658). The Ukrainian term for a distaff is *kuzhil'*.

[3] Here is material from earlier research and an interview with Katherine R, in which she speaks about this particular object. "Katherine explained that it was a *kuzhil'* [distaff], that the Ukrainian word suggested "twisting" and that the *kuzhil'* was made for her mother by the Polish field hand who helped her Father with farm work. She turned the piece over, admiring the simplicity and cleverness of the *kuzhil'*. In her mind, Katherine could still see the *kuzhil'* tied to the leg of a kitchen chair and on it, her mother spinning wool into yarn. I was struck by the fact that Katherine kept the *kuzhil'* in a vase of flowers. Katherine knows objects. She respects and honors them."
Excerpt from "A *Kuzhil'* [distaff] Among Flowers," seminar paper by Monica F.K. Jensen, 2 November 2000, Bohdan Medwidsky Ukrainian Folklore Archives in the Ukrainian Folklore Centre at the University of Alberta, Accession #2000.110.

[4] In speaking of the K family's ritual observance of Christmas, Kay notes that, by way of comparison "…at Grandfather's, everything was straw. Everything in the house. We used to just *love* going there, because at our house, it was under the table." In other words, Maksym and Annie H observed this calendar ritual with a generous attention to detail and filled their *khata* with straw. They did not simply place straw under the table or the tablecloth.
Interview with Kay K, 25 July 2003, Edmonton, AB, p. 20.

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[5] Kay, with sister Pauline joining in, jokes about elder sister, Annie, "running away" to the grandparents' home. Kay says, "And of course Annie…there's another story. She could talk herself out of everything in this world! [laughter] Happy-go-lucky. She was happy-go-lucky. I think she told you. She ran away from home. She'd go to Grandmother's and that was a big hike. I'm sure it was about 5 or 6 miles, but she didn't care. She'd go over and sleep over with Grandmother."

Pauline adds, "But Grandmother got wise to her and Mother told her to send her [Annie] right back home. This kid was just…!" And when asked why Annie would want to run away from home, both Kay and Pauline respond with one voice, "To get away from the work!"
Interview with Kay K. 25 July 2003. Edmonton. AB. p. 11.

[6] Kay's narrative of how she came to be named "Kay," is reminiscent of the stories spun in a book like *Cheaper By the Dozen* by Frank B. Gilbreth, Jr. and Ernestine Gilbreth Carey, New York: Bantam Books, 1948. In this chronicle, we read of ordinary events rendered hilarious when unfolding among a family of twelve siblings.

[7] Nellie K, the eldest of the K girls was married 11 October 1929 in Therien, Alberta.

[8] In the July 25th, 2003 interview of Kay, her sister, Pauline is also in the room and occasionally comments or adds to what Kay has said. For the most part though, the interview is with Kay. For the chapter on Kay K, I have interviewed her on three separate occasions: the first and third interviews are between Kay and me, and the second interview takes place with Pauline present.

[9] Andrew K was seventy-seven years old at the time of Kay's marriage to Rocky in 1956.

[10] Dr. Andriy Nahachewsky, dance scholar with a special interest in Ukrainian and Ukrainian-Canadian dance history, surmises that given the composition of the K family, with its roots in the Boiko region of Galicia, any Ukrainian-derived dances performed at Nellie and Philip's wedding were probably "the *arkan* or the *hutsulka* with squats." The *hopak* was a dance from central Ukraine. Thus, Kay has used later knowledge of the name of a particular dance, to refer to the Ukrainian-Canadian dancing at her sister's wedding.

[11] Although I have no Old World source for this custom, Olga Ternoway, who writes of Ukrainian-Canadian weddings taking place in the Smoky Lake, AB area, notes that "before the wedding, the gates were decorated by the bestmen with pine trees, pine bows and paper streamers" (Ternoway 1983: 36).

[12] Kay K married Rocky M on October 20, 1956. Kay was 39 years old when she married.

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[13] Because this interview with Kay takes place in Kay's kitchen with her sister Pauline present, and because Pauline in an earlier interview, which Kay has heard, has spoken of Ukrainian-Canadian funerary ritual, I refer Kay to Pauline's narrative. Pauline's irrepressible spirit and her quick mind are evident in Kay's narrative, for here and there, Pauline interjects a comment.

[14] Annie died on October 5th, 1944 just fifteen months after the death of her husband Maksym, who died on the 21st of July 1943. They had been married for fifty-eight years. Kay was twenty-seven at the time of her grandmother's death.

[15] The Ukrainian *khata* was built according to traditional and ritual guidelines, with the front door facing south, the *mala khata* (Little Room) on the west and the *velyka khata* (Great Room) on the east side with a storage space (*siny*) between the two rooms. The family's daily activity took place in the *mala khata* and around the *pich* (large clay stove) which was built into this room and used for cooking, for heat and as a sleeping platform for the younger children. The *velyka khata* (Great Room), which faced east and south, was the room in which the icons were hung. This room was reserved for special occasions, for guests, and for the presentation of the dead before burial. It was the room one entered in a reverent manner.

[16] Second-generation Ukrainian-Canadians of Galician extraction mention funerary ritual activities such as covering mirrors, holding a funeral dinner, distributing *kolachi* in memory of a deceased person at the funeral dinner (Klymasz 1992: 48-49), building the coffin, ritual washing of the deceased, women's lamentations over the body of the deceased, and having a service for the dead forty days after the death (Klymasz 1992: 105).

[17] As Kay is talking about the K family's move from Saskatchewan to Alberta, she notes that, "After we came to Alberta, she [Mother] kind of threw that shawl away [that is, the shawl Anna K wore to cover her head to indicate that she was a married woman]." And here, Pauline breaks in, "But Grandmother [Annie H] wore hers all the [time]…" "…to the bitter end. Grandmother wore this shawl and a little apron everywhere she went," Kay concludes.
Interview with Kay K, 25 July 2003, Edmonton, AB, p. 4.

[18] I had just asked Kay whether the K family observed *provody* when she was a child. She answered in the negative.

[19] Here, Kay's memory of the event is weak, for "Grandpa," that is, Maksym H has already passed away. Thus, if the family had made a coffin for Annie H, the coffin would have been made by one, some or all of Annie's five sons.

[20] The "they" that Kay refers to includes Maksym (46), Annie(41), Anna (17), Mike(14), Theo (8), Pearl(6), Katie(3) and Demetro(2).

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[21] On our first trip to Ukraine, my husband and I rented a modest apartment in Kiev, near our hosts Oksana and Ihor. The bed linens provided included two firm and ample pillows of the size that Kay describes in her narrative, approximately a two-foot by two-foot square.

[22] This is in sharp contrast to the R sisters, who barely interact with their grandfather, Wasyl R, and seem to have a more formal relationship with grandparents Ivan and Elena S, in spite of—in Katherine R's and Anne R's case, having lived with them.

[23] In casual conversation on June 24, 2005 in Bloomington, Indiana, Pete K spoke of his "granddad," Maksym. According to Pete, "One year, Granddad fasted so much, he got sick. They took him to the doctor who told him he had to eat some fattening food. Granddad never lived that down."

[24] It has been suggested by Dr. Andriy Nahachewsky that in all probability, Kay's choice to give up dancing for Lent was community-based. It was a traditional custom to set aside activities like dancing for the solemn period of Lent.

[25] When asked whether there was a division of labor among the K girls and the K boys, Kay and Pauline delight in explaining the labor situation in the family.
Kay: Oh definitely. You had girls' chores and you had boy chores.
 Interviewer: Did the girls help in the barn or in the fields at all?
Kay: We never did.
 Pauline: No, my father [would say,]"Go in the house with your mother!"
Kay: No, we never worked [outdoors] I think you [Pauline] and I…do you remember that? Stooking? I'm sure you must remember it. So we went with Dad. He showed us how to make stooks…and they're heavy…
 Pauline: I weighed about 70lbs. A stook weighed about a hundred.
Kay: So you have to put them a certain way.
 Pauline: Like this and like that and then the air has to get into the…
Kay: So we had a row that was for us…and we're puttin' these stooks and at the end of the row they're all falling…Dad says [gestures "get out"] [Much laughter] So we came home
 Pauline: That was the end of our career…
Interview with Kay K, 23 July 2003, Edmonton, AB, p. 10-11.

[26] *Kay*: Well, when Mum and Dad would go…once a week or whenever…they'd go, maybe buy salt and pepper and that kind of stuff, and, Pauline, remember? Everyone would do whatever they wanted. [All the kids would engage in their "favorite" mischief.] Billy was the boss. He liked to put eggs in the oven.
 Pauline: Oh, God!
Kay: You remember? And Alec, he used to like potato peels on the stove. Each one of us would do something.
 Pauline: I remember the eggs because he damn near blew the house apart.

Kay: Oh yeah, you had to watch, because once... Oh yeah. It would blow the door open. [laughter]

Pauline: The [egg] shell [would come]—"wooosh"! And that yolk comes at you!…[loud laughter]

Kay: Everything—kesplash! And I said I liked…[deafening laughter]….Anyway, I liked whipped cream. O.K. You go to the well and get the cream and make the cream …so Mum had a pantry and she had that liniment and that cow medicine, that's all for the kids, and the vanilla was there. So I ran into…Mama's gone. I ran…and instead of picking up the vanilla…[Kay picks up the red liniment instead]…

Pauline: Tasted it.

Kay: [I] tasted it…and I thought, oh my heavens, it's red liniment. And my thinking…stupid…you know, I should have…I went and poured the vanilla in there, it's going to take it away. Well it didn't. And so, I thought, Mum's coming home, I can't have this in the house. So I went to the pig pen and dumped it in the…and put a little water, so mother wouldn't see...We never tattled on one another. That's. You never did anything, because you'd get a damn good lickin' from "the tribe." [laughter]

Pauline: It wasn't one, but all six of us. [laughing uproariously]

Kay: All six of us, like a Mafia! [laughter] And anyway, so the pigs ate this, the whipped cream with the liniment. And Dad was supposed to take the pigs to the market the next day. So he comes into the house and he says…he used to call mother, "Mati"

Pauline: Mati …

Kay: He says to mother, "I don't know what's wrong with all the pigs, they've got diarrhea. I can't take them to the market."
And the pigs are just shootin' [laughter] . They're eating my liniment. [wild laughter]. Nobody said a thing.

Interviewer: There was a real code!

Kay: Oh, you never, never tattled on one another. Never!

Pauline: Now I think that runs in large families. You stick up for one another…
Interview with Kay, 25 July 2003, Edmonton, AB, pp. 21-22.

[27] This would have been while the K family lived in Saskatchewan and between Kay's birth date and the year the Ks left, in other words, between 1917 and 1928.

[28] A Christmas tree from a German family celebration would still be timely for a Ukrainian family celebrating Orthodox Christmas. The Orthodox Christmas is observed thirteen days after the non-Orthodox Christmas. The Eastern (Orthodox) church follows the Julian calendar; whereas the Western (Catholic) church follows the Gregorian calendar. The two calendars are thirteen days apart.

[29] Although I have not been able to find a reference to this specific ritual act, second-generation Ukrainian-Canadians of Galician extraction described their early Christmases in Canada in similar terms (Robert Klymasz paraphrasing): "Christmas Eve dinner in the Old Country and here began when the evening star appeared; there was no tree but a sheaf of rye behind the table in the corner, straw under the table…, and the twelve dishes. *Pshenytsia* [wheat, *kutia* when cooked] was cast at the ceiling; if it stuck to the ceiling, it

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would be a sign of good luck since it meant that the bees would swarm and produce lots of honey….At Christmas, carols were sung at home, especially if guests were present." (Klymasz 1992: 46-47). Maksym and Annie's son Harry gives a rich description of the manner in which the H family observed Christmas (K Family Origins Chapter, endnote #12).

[30] Here, Kay refers to a Ukrainian folk belief, which her father seemingly observed, that on Christmas Eve, the farm animals have the capacity to speak to God. According to Voropai, "To hit any animal today is a great sin, but at midnight [Christmas Eve] any animal will speak with human language to God. God will ask how the master behaves or how the animal feels under the management of the master. If the master doesn't hit [the animal] and feeds the animal well, the animal will hail its master in front of God. But if the animal is starving and cries, the owner [only has himself to blame and] should not complain to anybody if he has no luck with his farming practices in the next year" (Voropai 1958: 69).

[31] Andrew K fed the cattle on Christmas Eve, no doubt with special food and in a reverential manner.

[32] Christmas caroling and Christmas carols (*koliadky*) were an occasional feature of the Ukrainian-Canadian prairie community. The caroling in some village traditions could last up to twelve days after Christmas, and thus, it is possible that in Birmingham some days after Christmas, caroling would have been encountered. *Koliadky* were based on Biblical themes from the Gospels and the apocryphal tales. They tell of the birth of Christ, of Herod and the Three Wisemen, and of the baptism, sufferings, and death of Christ. Singers went from house to house, costumed as various characters from the Biblical stories. (*Ukraine: A Concise Encyclopaedia*, 1963: 356)

[33] According to Robert B. Klymasz, "On the prairies, Ukrainian mummery was a popular secular activity that celebrated the arrival of a new year by focussing attention on a fictitious comical female figure named *Malanka*….The Ukrainian tradition …included special *Malanka* songs, and the mummers themselves were never female but always male. To heighten the sense of gaiety, the most ungraceful, lanky, awkward and gangling specimen would be chosen to masquerade in female dress as *Malanka* herself; her entourage of costumed mummers would include a boisterous assortment of personages [eg. a tottering old man, a stern-looking captain, a gendarme, an old *baba*, gypsies, bearded Jews, a goat, devils].

Malanka mummers made a special effort to visit families that included unmarried young girls who, for their part, looked forward and indeed expected to receive the revelers in their homes over the New Year holiday season….The *Malanka* event on the prairie functioned to provide an opportunity for young people to scrutinize one another, and to test and hint at intentions of betrothal" (Klymasz 1985: 32-34).

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[34] Sometime in or after 1910, the K family moved from its *khata*, the log-mud-thatched roof structure on its original quarter-section, to a two-storey Anglo-Canadian style house on the immediate north side of Birmingham. Andrew K built this second house with a large barn to the side of it. Although now derelict, both buildings still stand at the edge of what was once Birmingham, SK. According to a number of K family members, Pete (b. 1910) was the last of the K babies to be born in the *khata*. Thereafter, the family moved two quarter-sections straight south, to its new "Birmingham" home. Seven year's Pete's junior, Kay would only remember life in the newer two-storey house.

[35] The K family left Saskatchewan on 1 April 1928. At the time, Kay was eleven and Pauline was nine years old.

[36] This would have been between 1923 and 1927.

[37] Kay, for many years now, spends Christmas and sometimes New Years in Glendon with the family of her younger brother, Alec. Glendon and the K family there are notable for community-wide Ukrainian-Canadian calendar celebrations. Thus, Kay would be quite familiar with *Malanka* on New Year's Eve and with the various *Malanka* characters, which include a devil. Pauline, on the other hand, having lived most of her adult life in Vermont, and now Florida, is not particularly knowledgeable regarding Ukrainian-Canadian calendar celebrations as they now take place in various communities.

[38] As a point of interest, here is a description of 19th century Easter ritual activity in the area from which the K and H family elders emigrated. "[Easter Sunday] after the blessing of the *paska* baskets [at church], they ran as fast as they could to their homes, in order to have a happy year. After the end of the official [Easter] dinner, the entertainment, which lasted for three days, began. The youth started to play different games with *krashanky* [solid-colored Easter eggs]" (Boikivshchyna 1983: 236).

[39] During the 19th century, in the area from which the K and H families originated, *Zeleni Sviata* was observed in the following manner. "On Green Holidays, the people decorated their houses, other out buildings and fences near the yard with greens. The reason was 'to protect themselves and their household from *rusalky*.' The other reason was to prevent them [the *rusalky*] from flying into the house and tickling everybody to death" (Boikivshchyna 1983: 237). Folk belief has it that *rusalky* were woodland water nymphs, beautiful young women, who could entice one to death and who were particularly active "on the tenth Monday after Easter" (Kubijovyc 1963: 329).

Regarding the observance of *Zeleni Sviata* among second-generation Ukrainian-Canadians—of Bukovynian extraction— in Smoky Lake, AB, M. Ratsoy notes: "Before the big day, the houses were whitewashed and the benches scrubbed. The outside was decked with poplar trees and branches. All wild flowers were picked to decorate the inside. These flowers and herbs were later dried and put in bath water, to perfume it.

Young people were not allowed to go swimming till one week after Pentecost Sunday [*Zeleni Sviata*]; the saying was that the nymphs might get them" (Ratsoy 1983:33).

[40] *Petra* would have been a patron saint celebration for some of the local churches.

[41] Another second-generation Ukrainian-Canadian of Galician extraction describes a similar celebration of *Zeleni Sviata* to Robert Klymasz (who paraphrases her): "For Green Holydays, Mariia's mother went at dawn to fetch young green poplar boughs for her father to implant into holes by the house later that day. The house was bedecked inside, and everywhere you could smell the poplars (*duzhe pakhlo*)" (Klymasz 1992: 103).

Pauline K

Before Kay's notification that her sister Pauline was in Edmonton and available for an interview, I had little acquaintance with Pauline. She had always been a remote figure, who lived in a distant place, a name on a list, really. It was with delight and trepidation that I approached her. And for her part, Pauline knew me as well as I knew her, which is to say, not at all.

Pauline had met her American husband while working in Alaska for the Canadian government during the Second World War. Once married, she moved with her husband to his home in Vermont. There she raised their two daughters. Although she stayed close to her sisters in Alberta, particularly with Kay, through phone calls and letters, Pauline visited Alberta only infrequently in the years after she married. In retirement, having sold her home and extensive lake-front property in Vermont, Pauline has moved to Boca Raton in Florida.

Pauline had journeyed to Edmonton for the H family reunion. The reunion was to be held in Saskatchewan, in the area around Birmingham where the Ks originally settled, among the sheltering branches of the H family.[1] There would be some days before we all headed east from Edmonton for the reunion. The pre-reunion days offered an ideal moment for me to interview Pauline.

As previously noted, Kay, who knew of my research interests and of my desire to interview all of her sisters, facilitated my introduction to Pauline. Kay simply brought Pauline over to my apartment for dinner one warm July evening. The next morning I returned the visit, and sitting in Kay's kitchen, Pauline was ready for her interview. Because Kay was also present, I asked Kay to remain silent as much as possible. I would be interviewing Kay following the interview with Pauline, and for that, I would ask Pauline to be silent. It was a somewhat artificial situation, but it also offered up the opportunity for much amusement. Ultimately the experience of interviewing first, Pauline, and then Kay was akin to herding cats. It was impossible for either of them to keep completely silent. Thus, there are moments when the two sisters converse during each of the other's interview. I do not think that this affects the over-all nature of the interview. Indeed, it seems to enliven, heighten, and aid in recollection. Because my other interviews were conducted one on one, I considered it imperative to follow this format to keep the interviews on a somewhat equal footing. The interviews with both sisters were full of good humor and a sense of trust and genuine sharing. We three had a delightful time together at Kay's kitchen table with my tape recorder and scratched notes. And like the blithe spirits they are in real life, Kay and Pauline laughed often and uproariously at certain recollections.

Because Pauline left home as a young woman, married a man her father did not approve of—his background was non-Ukrainian—settled far away with her husband and only returned to Alberta for an occasional visit when her two daughters were old enough to travel, Pauline is the sister furthest from the ebb and flow of her Ukrainian-Canadian background. So although Pauline may not be able to name certain Ukrainian-Canadian celebrations as quickly as Kay can, she, nevertheless remembers K family ritual activity and what she thought of it as a child.

Born in 1919, Pauline is the eighth child among the ten Ks. She intimates that she was one of the treasured and loved babies of the family and indeed, she was.[2] As a child, she was a girlish little girl,[3] aware of beautiful things, the frills her eldest sister Nellie could sew for her or the "Eaton's Beauty Doll" she received for Christmas. She formed a tight bond with her sister Kay, her elder by two years. The two girls, as children, were noted in their family for giggling together. And as adults, the room is filled with good-natured laughter when the two of them are in it.

One has a sense that Pauline was deeply immersed in the rhythms of the family. Yet she carried a streak of rebelliousness. After all, she married a man of Dutch origin, much to her father's chagrin. But more to the point here, when in her narratives, Pauline refers to the term "tradition," it is a two-edged term for her. On the one hand, Pauline alludes to tradition as something old and passed along that her family honored; on the other hand, tradition is a senseless adherence to outmoded or harmful ways, for example, the heavy drinking that accompanied ritual observance. Off and on she speaks with wry humor about her father's following "tradition" when he drinks heartily.

We will see that Pauline is also uniquely aware of the presence of tradition in the present. She notes the similarity of her grandmother's use of Holy Water to that of a Vermont Baptist priest when her own daughter is quite ill. She makes a connection about neighborly visiting— a required component for her parents' and grandparents' celebration of Christmas —and the contemporary Christmas celebration at brother Alec's during which the visits back and forth among family and neighbors continues into the small hours of the morning and over a period of days.

Let us now turn to Pauline's narratives, first those that address rites of passage and secondly, those concerning calendar rituals.

Personal Narrative: Pauline (Rite of Passage: Marriage)

25 July 2003, pg. 1-2—Nellie's Wedding
MJ: I'm real curious. Because Nellie was the oldest daughter…When she married, was her wedding in any way Ukrainian?

PS: She was married in a, what was it? Therien. It's Therien [small town west of Glendon], I remember. She was very, and it was maybe in the Fall sometime.[4] And she had a very pretty, the style of her dress was like today. Chiffon. Very flimsy. Just gorgeous. It was a peach color.

MJ: Did she make it for herself?

PS: No. This one…I would say, that dress today would be very high fashion. And I don't think she had a veil. I don't know. But all it was, was dinner and a lot of drinking and dancing. And there wouldn't have been more than 20 people, 25 people, because, by that time we had left Saskatchewan and we were in Alberta, so we didn't know that many people. She got married in Therien.

MJ: Do you remember if there were any sort of games where the groomsmen had to, where the groom had to pay a ransom or anything like that?

PS: No, no. Because there weren't that many people. Now probably if the wedding was in Saskatchewan, it would have been different. But we had just moved and the house was small. Father was starting all over again; whereas, in Saskatchewan, they had a big farm and all this stuff. I don't know why he moved. Bankruptcy or something? It was a drought.

MJ: Do you remember…I'm jumping around, but I'd better ask. At Nellie's wedding was the dancing, was it Ukrainian in any way?

PS: The food was all Ukrainian. And, yes, there was dancing.

MJ: Do you remember if it was couple dancing or people dancing in big circles…?

PS: All I can remember is that the people that came had kids. So we had our own party. And the adults…probably, you know, everybody drinking and whatever, and hoppin' and dancin' around. But the whole thing was like over by, maybe about six o'clock, and I can remember the taking her,[5] goin' away with her husband, you know, *she* was my *mother*. Because, you know, Mother was busy. And I cried so much, because she was leaving.

MJ: But there wasn't like a double wedding party, where they partied at your family's home and then they partied at Philip's family's home?

PS: No, there wasn't. Well, Philip's family was nil, because he was from Russia[6] and nothing.

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In remembering the wedding of her eldest sister, Nellie, Pauline focuses upon the "gorgeous" aspects of the rite of passage and her own emotional state. The wedding is a wedding among strangers. In 1928, the K family had left the security of their Saskatchewan home with H relatives all around, and moved to a new homestead in Alberta. Nellie's wedding is a mere year and a half after the relocation.

The wedding party is a small one, twenty to twenty-five people.[7] It would seem that the Ks have not had time to widen the circle of acquaintances in their new community. On the groom's side, Nellie's Ukrainian-Canadian beau is without family in Canada. Pauline notes that the wedding party would have been different, "if the wedding was in Saskatchewan." The H clan would not only have expanded the numbers of the guests, they would have, no doubt, affected the content of the celebration. Practiced in the ways of Ukrainian-Canadian ritual observance, Maksym and Annie and their family, doubtless would have facilitated a large, spirited, days-long Ukrainian-Canadian wedding.

Pauline emphasizes the modern aspects of her sister's wedding. She says, "the style of her dress was like today." Nellie wore a beautiful diaphanous peach-colored chiffon dress. And although Nellie is a master-seamstress, her wedding dress has been purchased, a mark of special distinction. Having someone else make you a beautiful dress that you or your parents pay for, is a step towards being modern.

Like Kay's description of Nellie's wedding, Pauline recounts what she considers to be an Anglo-Canadian wedding. But Ukrainian-Canadian gestures do creep into her narrative. The food is Ukrainian. The dancing is probably, in part, Ukrainian-derived dancing.[8] Pauline says, "everybody [is] drinking and whatever, and hoppin' and dancin' around." An important rite of passage for Nellie and, of course, for the K family, Nellie's wedding would also seem to be a kind of entrée into the new community.

Sister Nellie and what is happening to her does not feature prominently in Pauline's narrative. However, for Pauline, Nellie's wedding is ultimately wrenching. She remembers that the wedding festivities are over by the relatively early hour of six o'clock. Pauline recalls this detail because it is the moment when she is torn from her "mother," that is, sister Nellie. As the eldest girl, eleven years older than Pauline, Nellie has been de-facto mother for her younger siblings. Nellie's leave-taking at the conclusion of her wedding celebration is heart breaking for the ten-year old Pauline: she says, "and I can remember the taking her, goin' away with her husband, you know, *she* was my *mother*. Because, you know, Mother was busy. And I cried so much, because she was leaving."

And thus, Pauline reveals the bonds that exist among the K sisters (and children), that is, that there are close emotional bonds (of warmth) and a system of mutual help and connectedness. Because of family exigency, both the K family and the R family relied on the older siblings to take on parental responsibility for the younger ones.[9] And indeed, Pauline reports that at the age of ten, she is closer to Nellie than she is to her own mother. This family closeness is evident during the interviews for this dissertation. Pauline and Kay, while trying to preserve the individual integrity of each other's interviews[10], cannot but help themselves, to, every now and then, interject some point of humor or to playfully tease. There is much laughter between them.

The two prominent centers of Pauline's narrative about the first wedding among the Ks consist in a child's heartbreak over separation from a nurturing elder and a wistfulness for what might have been if the wedding had been celebrated among the larger family group back in Saskatchewan. From her child's-eye perspective, Pauline sees that life in Alberta has thus far failed to measure up to life in Saskatchewan; the house is smaller, there are fewer people to join in for a celebration. She wonders why her father is now starting all over again. Perhaps Pauline is a lightening rod for the K family's feeling. Surely in the midst of a joyous occasion in the new environs, there is sadness and uncertainty. Pauline seems to capture this with her tears at Nellie's wedding.

Personal Narrative: Pauline (Rite of Passage: Death)

> 25 July 2003, pg. 2-3—Rite of Passage: Death
> *MJ: What about, when you were back in Saskatchewan, do you remember any funerals in the area…among your neighbors, where you attended or you observed?*
>
> PS: Uh-huh. Sometimes you wonder why… you're so little and your parents allowed it. I remember Kay and I, do you remember this? [Pauline is asking her sister, Kay, who is in the kitchen.] Mrs. Worthington? It was a neighbor, wasn't it. Yeah. And her body was in part of her house, just a pine casket, nothing fancy. And why we ever were there, I don't know. And we came and they led us to this parlor. Years ago they had…they took a washcloth and it was frozen and you looked at her face and it was blue! And they did nothing to people in those days, you know. They just dressed them and that was the funeral.
>
> And then another one, a baby died. Alec K's little guy died [she means to say, "Fred K's little guy"]. Remember? Alec. Father's brother Fred, and umm, what was her name…? Fred and…, that was my uncle… Fred K, that was his name. And they had a stillborn child, and it was a little boy [Alec]. And they already had three little daughters when this little fellow was born. They just kept him on the

dining, on the table. They had a two-room house [a *khata*]. And just like a little baby sleeping there, with four candles.

MJ: I see.

PS: And people would come and pray and visit.

MJ: Do you know if the mother of the child kept a candle burning in the window?

PS: Ah, yes. Yes, yes.

MJ: Do you remember any sort of procession to the cemetery, where…

PS: I don't remember a thing, but I remember that baby on the table. And we would come and look at it. You know, everybody loved it. But I do remember people kneeling and praying.

MJ: Do you remember if any of the women keened? It's a sort of ritual mourning where they sing, but they sort of cry at the same time. The Irish do that. Do you know if they did keening for that?

Sister Kay: Yes, yes. [The women did keen.]

PS: I don't. [remember] I was only about four.

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As Pauline turns to the subject of funerals, she drives the point home that parents should protect their children: "sometimes you wonder why…you're so little and your parents allowed it." Looking back, Pauline wonders why her parents permitted her, as a child, to view the blue face of the dead Mrs. Worthington.[11] The details of that blue face have stayed with her. Of course, Pauline communicates that for the most part she *was* a protected child, for only the moments when her parents let down their guard come to mind. In other words, a thing is present by its absence. That Pauline censures her parents a bit for her having been alarmed by a blue face, only serves to suggest that on many occasions her parents did indeed protect her and allowed her to be a child.[12]

When she thinks of funerals, it is Mrs. Worthington's blue face that comes to Pauline's mind. But when she hones in on potential family or Ukrainian-Canadian funerals, Pauline comes to the death of a baby, a cousin of hers. Little Alec is laid out in a small box on the table in his parents' *khata* with four candles, probably arranged at the four corners of the coffin/box. Mourners come to view the body, to pray, to pay their respects to the family and to weep. Pauline remembers no ritual keening, but sister Kay (interjecting) does. Thus, there might have been women singing ritual mourning songs—keening— at the wake for baby Alec. Pauline has a good visual memory. She is sensitive to visual stimuli. In the narrative, there is a magical quality to Pauline's image of the tiny, doll-like figure in a box. She senses the sadness of the adults, but as a small child herself, is fascinated by the precious toy-child, seemingly sleeping in its little box.

As an adult, Pauline does not set forth the Ukrainian-Canadian features of the baby's funeral. She seems to take them for granted. Yet she has described portions of a Ukrainian-Canadian funeral and seems not to be aware of the uniqueness of the details. Pauline is simply an insider when it comes to Ukrainian-Canadian rite of passage ritual activity.

In three narratives that fill-in the picture of her grandparents and parents, Pauline describes the surroundings and activity of her elders. The fact that Pauline chooses to speak of her elders in the following manner is indicative of the inclusive nature of K family identity.

Personal Narrative: Pauline (Ritual: Miscellaneous) #1

[PS: 25 July 2003, pg. 12]—Architecture

MJ: Do you remember ever seeing the khata, the little thatched-roof house that…

PS: …Grandmother? Oh, yes….

MJ: Did she have a pich [oven]?

PS: Oven, in the chimney. Oh, yes. The kitchen was in the middle. Well, one big, you know, table and that was considered it [a kitchen] and then on one side was another big room and on the other side, the kids all slept there and Grandmother and Grandfather slept there. The doors had steps to each room was like that [she gestures]. And the windows weren't big and they had sills like that [She gestures the inward slant of the sills].

> *MJ: Very traditional.*
>
> PS: Oh, and the ceiling was very low and it had like beams and it was really a mud hut. But boy, did she keep it white. I remember, she'd always, she would put blue, bluing. She thought nothing of painting the walls, of white-washing them.

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Maksym and Annie live in a *khata*. Pauline can see, in her mind's eye, the *pich*, the kitchen table, their position in the room and the room's position in the *khata*. She knows that the *khata* has three rooms, and that the family all sleeps in one room. One must step over the threshold beam below each door to enter a room and the windows have sills that slant inward to let in more light. The ceiling is low and the ceiling beams exposed. In every detail, Pauline shows that she has studied aspects of her grandparents' *khata* and in a sense observed them because these details are important to her.

Why would this be so? Pauline admits that the place "was really a mud hut," in reality, a very simple, humble place.[13] First, we have Pauline's visual acuity. She is particularly sensitive to the visual impact of things. Then there is a sense of Pauline considering her grandparents' home a very special place, a place worth holding closely in her mind. This she does, and by doing so, communicates her deep ties to and love and respect for her grandparents. Their *khata* has been a place of joy, of play and of refuge for her.

Turning from physical description, Pauline focuses on her grandmother, the energy of the woman. She was a hard worker and by extension, a good homemaker. Pauline uses the word "white," referring to the walls of the *khata*, in surprised delight: "Boy, did she keep it *white*." The job of white-washing a small *khata* must have been a big job. Grandmother Annie would do the work as if it were nothing! She had strength; she had energy; she had standards. She was good. She was thorough. All this, Pauline communicates. Her narrative hints at family pride, that her tiny Ukrainian grandmother had the will to keep things up in a traditional way. Pauline expresses her continued surprise at the sheer energy of the woman and identifies with her, not as an artifact, but as a treasured family role model.

Personal Narrative: Pauline (Ritual: Miscellaneous) #2

25 July 2003, pg. 13—Play
Pauline: Well, grandmother… Did they ever move out [of their *khata*] to anything else? [This question is posed to sister Kay.]

Kay : Uh-uh. Both of them died there [in their *khata*]. [Maksym in 1943. Annie in 1944.]

PS: Because Nick [Nick H, their son] built a house right next to them.[14] That's the last time I was there. And Nick had the house next to them, but Grandmother and Grandfather never, never gave it up. So that was nice, that they could die there, too. Oh, yeah, those two mud-huts [*khata*], I remember.

MJ: So in a really graceful way, they were able to keep one foot in the Old Country and one foot in the new country. They were fortunate in that regard.

PS: Oh, yeah. I really think that they both died right there.

Kay : Oh, yes. They did. They did. It was a typical Ukrainian house, you know, with the roof kind 'a low and then Granddad [Maksym] used to sit…do you remember?

PS: …By that window…
Kay: Yup.

MJ: Inside or outside?

Kay: Outside and then inside.

PS: Inside. By the window. Yes, I used to play hop-scotch with him. We'd always pick out…you see…by the window the heat would melt the snow…we got a little place for it….

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In her second narrative about Maksym and Annie, Pauline asks her sister, "Did they ever move out to anything else?" She wonders whether Maksym and Annie moved from their *khata* into another home at some point. Kay's response is touching: "Both of them died there." So after leaving their village, Ulychno, the grandparents lived all of their lives in their Saskatchewan *khata*, that is, from 1903 to 1944. This is somehow comforting to Pauline. She responds to Kay's answer by adding, "Grandmother and Grandfather never, never gave it up. So that was nice, that they could die there, too."

What is it that Pauline considers them not to have given up? Their familiar log and adobe house, built by them in earlier days and undoubtedly patched over the years? Their rooted-ness in a life of honored ritual rhythms, passed on to their family? Their adherence to "home" life or agrarian life? Their Old World ways? Their bond to each other and to their children and grandchildren? Their zest for life? Somehow, the rounded-out quality of their lives, the symmetry of their living and dying in the *khata*, gives Pauline a good feeling. It seemed right that they settled on their quarter-section and stayed there and became part of it, figuratively and literally. It would seem that Pauline continues to derive strength from Maksym and Annie's way of being and of doing.

Somehow, Pauline's reflections on her grandparents' dying in their *khata*, the comforting note of this, leads to a recollection even more comforting. Maksym took the time to play with his little granddaughters. For Pauline, he seems to have been nurturing, respectful, and communicated the importance of play, of having fun. He took time to play himself.[15]

Almost as an afterthought, Kay begins to picture the *khata* for Pauline. She can see their grandfather seated both inside the *khata* and outside the *khata*, near a window: "…and then Granddad used to sit…do you remember?" Kay asks Pauline. Pauline picks up the thought and the image and says, "By the window. Yes, I used to play hop-scotch with him." On a patch of bare ground where the sun had melted the snow away, one or two little girls, no doubt impatient to be outside and playing, were encouraged to play hop-scotch by Grandfather. To their even greater delight, he would at times join in and play hop-scotch himself. For Pauline, the sisters experienced their grandfather as an elder validating their play, absorbing his respectful manner around them. Maksym somehow communicated that everyone in the family, certainly two little hop-scotching granddaughters, was important.

That Kay and Pauline can easily slip in to each other's narratives, would seem to indicate that they are emotionally close and were so as children. They collectively remember the hop-scotch. Together, they see the simple scene with Maksym and seem to agree on its import. Nevertheless, the endearing image of a grandfather hop-scotching with his granddaughters is not to be the definitive picture of the K family. It is, of course, one of many pictures. Pauline introduces yet another image of the K's in a narrative about the "tradition" of imbibing spirits. Her narrative begins with thoughts of Christmas and "the other holidays." Sundays would be a day of ritual rest: "We'd sort of close up shop Sundays," she says. Then she turns to her idea of "tradition."

Personal Narrative: Pauline (Ritual: Miscellaneous) #3

25 July 2003, pg. 14—Imbibing & Spirited Beverages
PS: Well, you know Christmas...and the other holidays. But that's tradition. And we'd sort of close up shop Sundays. And the men...[unintelligible from Kay] and they did like their hori-wootch-ka. [She laughs. Kay laughs.]

MJ: The horilka![16] *What did you call it?*

PS: You know what we used to call Mrs. H,...? Oh, God! What an alkie [alcoholic] she was! "Oh, Hori-wootch-ka, Hori-wootch-ka!" She would still be at the door [much laughter between Kay and Pauline]. She drank like a fish!

MJ: A party-er.
Kay: A real party woman.

PS: Oh, they were! Unfortunately, my father's capacity wasn't too good. And the hang-overs that guy had, but did it teach him anything? No. [much laughter]

MJ: But he was somehow cheerful as a [an inebriated person].

PS: The older he got, once he, like, you know, when I got married, I was forbid to go home for about five years because I married a "damn" Englishman. You know, you, tradition, tradition.

MJ: And this was your father?

PS: Oh, yeah! So I hadn't seen him for like that period of time. And after, oh, I was scared to go up. I kind 'a pushed the two little girls [her daughters, Marsha and Lynn] in first. ...And he adored those girls. I think. They would crawl all over him and make coils [curls] for him and he had about ten wisps [of hair] . I could not get over how mellow he'd gotten. And he couldn't drink, like, "oh, no, no." And I'd wished he would quit. That was years ago. God, how that guy suffered. He'd get up in the middle of the night: "Buttermilk! Buttermilk!" [laughter] And he'd be in bed all day. We knew enough...at a very early age to...

MJ:...tiptoe around him.

PS: And mother just took it. You know, mother never drank a lot. Mother was more low-key. She was more a H [an H family member], like her parents; whereas, father was a little bit like I am...high strung [laughter] and, like ordered... people. He liked to be waited on.

MJ: Yeah, we all do... interesting.

PS: That was the tradition. [laughter]

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Ceasing daily labor and observing Christmas, other holidays, Sundays, this activity is embedded in Pauline's idea of what tradition is. But the men, "they did like their *hori-wootch-ka*," Pauline continues. For Pauline, this is "tradition," too. She equates tradition to the persistence of spirited beverages, particularly among the men.

Pauline's term "hori-wootch-ka" is an interesting one. It seems to be a child's conflation of the Ukrainian word for vodka, that is, *horilka*, possibly in its diminutive form, *horivochka*, and a play on the name of a neighbor woman who was evidently a serious drinker.[17] The amusing term, "hori-wootch-ka," applies to both the beverage and to the neighbor by the sisters. Kay and Pauline laugh conspiratorially on this detail, as they must have laughed as children. It would seem that as children, they created their own private language and continue to share bits of this language up to the present.

Pauline notes that her father would drink like others around him on the holidays and would suffer from the consequences. This drinking, Pauline labels "tradition." She implies that at ritual celebrations, her father would drink and then suffer for it. But in her narrative, she is allowing, that is, she does not blame. From Pauline, we have a sense that her father is neither better nor worse than those around him: he is just like the neighbors. There is no particular shame attached to his behavior, it is simply painful to observe for it causes him suffering and affects others in the family.

Pauline uses humor to communicate. Neither her father nor the redoubtable Mrs. H are immune from her joking. The K family was enough of a firmly-woven cloth, that the drinking of Pauline's father did not threaten his children. It was something Pauline had empathy for. He suffered. She was outside of it, but sufficiently connected to him to understand that he was suffering.

Although Pauline would agree that Christmas and Easter are an important part of her family's calendar ritual observance, which she terms "tradition," Pauline also relates the idea of tradition to the repetition of harmful behavior, such as heavy drinking. She expands this to include the repetition of harmful ideas, such as ethno-centric prejudice.[18] For marrying a non-Ukrainian-Canadian man, Pauline is forbidden by her father to return home for nearly five years, doubtless, a painful edict to endure.

It is the soothing effect of her young daughters, that finally heals the breach between Pauline and her father. The two little girls "crawl all over him and make coils [curls] for him…" The children enable him to put aside his prejudice, the ultra-Ukrainian ethnocentrism, and draw his daughter back to him. With a touch of cynicism, Pauline mockingly calls Andrew's prejudice "tradition."

In her narrative, Pauline is also somewhat surprised that her mother "just took it," that is that Anna allowed her husband to drink without strong wifely intervention. This implies that Pauline, if in the same situation, would not have been so accepting. Pauline does not attribute her mother's behavior to an erosion—women who just gave up—which some wives suffered in light of their husband's adherence to alcohol. She seems to think that Anna gave Andrew the benefit of the doubt.

Ending with laughter, as she began with laughter, Pauline reiterates a point that must hold some importance for her. Christmas, *Iordan*, Easter are strongly associated with Ukrainian-Canadian tradition in her family, but to her way of thinking, so are drinking to the point of inebriation, acting prejudicially, and a man's wanting to be waited on hand and foot by his wife and family.

Personal Narrative: Pauline (Calendar Ritual: Christmas)

25 July 2003, pg. 4-5—Christmas
PS: I think it was part of that, in that, like Christmas Eve was pretty much family. And then after that you, it was just go, go…and people coming to your house all the time. And I had these cousins I adored. And you thought nothing of, you brought all your kids, and the kids would just slide down the steps. We had our own parties. Bring those feather beds downstairs, and it's just "schoo." [The sound of speeding down the banister.] Nobody told you, "no, no, no!" [Laughter] so, that, I remember.

MJ: What about Christmas Eve? Did you wait to see the first star?

PS: The first star. Oh, yes.

MJ: And then you would eat after that.

PS: Yes, because that's when the…And you had to have all the barn chores done, because the cows talked.

MJ: I assume that your parents told you stories, so that you understood [that the cows talked].

PS: Yeah. Well that's how you remember. You know, every Christmas you have to wait for the first star.

MJ: Who usually spotted the first star?

PS: Well, everybody was running to the windows, or outdoors, because the windows were all frozen. [laughter] Oh, yeah, the first star.

MJ: Did your parents spread poppy seeds outside?

PS: No.

MJ: And was Christmas Eve different in any way from Christmas day? Or was it all…

PS: Oh, yes. Christmas Eve was THE biggest day. You know, all this anticipation. It wasn't the gifts: it was the tradition. And Christmas day, we usually got one gift each. I think for us, for those days, that was pretty darn good. We didn't get gifts [plural]. And that was early, five o'clock in the morning. And Christmas day, we played with toys. And the dinner, mother cooked for weeks before. So what was nice, after that, you ate warmed over stuff. There was company all day long, come and go.

MJ: Do you remember, would people greet one another in any particular way?

PS: *Dai bozhe*. [laughter] I remember that.

#####

Pauline has something to say about all the major calendar rituals in the Ukrainian-Canadian cycle: Christmas, *Iordan*, Easter and *Zeleni Sviata*. According to her, the K family has observed them all. She does not go into detail about the ritual activity accorded each of the feast days. Instead, we see Pauline communicating her family's implicit understanding of these rituals. For example, in her narrative about Christmas, yes, the family waited expectantly for the first star of the evening—of Christmas Eve, to appear. And, yes, there was a general belief that the farm animals talked on this special night. Christmas Eve was for the family only, but on Christmas day the visiting of relatives and neighbors began. The children had their "own parties." Joy and high-spiritedness seem to have reigned. Pauline does not hesitate: that Christmas was fully observed, religiously, ritualistically and socially, is not a question in her mind.

She underscores the fact that gifts were not an important part of the Christmases the K family celebrated when she was a child. She says, "You know, all this anticipation. It wasn't the gifts: it was the tradition." In her shifting use of the word "tradition," Pauline seems to mean that the ritual gestures of Christmas, all of which had meaning to the family, when played out for the days of Christmas, reverberated with meaning.

In a second narrative about the K family's celebration of Christmas, Pauline insists that her mother marked Christmas and Easter in the same way that her grandmother Annie did: "She did not cut corners when it came to Christmas and Easter," Pauline notes. There seems to have been little to no generational slackening in the efforts to follow Christmas ritual, at least according to Pauline.

Personal Narrative: Pauline (Calendar Ritual: Christmas and Easter)

25 July 2003, pg. 10-11—Christmas and Easter in general
MJ: Do you think that…did your mother insist on celebrating things in certain ways because of what she had learned from her parents? Or did she, more-or-less, just hand you all over to them because she knew that they would be celebrating something and it would be easier for her not to make a big "do" about it because they were already celebrating?

PS: No, she was very, she wanted things done the way she knew how.

MJ: So you would say that she was fairly traditional…

PS: She did not cut corners when it came to Christmas and Easter. And I remember a couple of times, I'd kind' a get very mad, and [and she'd say] "No." You couldn't do it this way. I think she tried to follow tradition, with her grandmother. [She means with her mother.]

MJ: It sounds as if she did. Particularly when you were in Saskatchewan.

PS: But my brother Alec, I'd say he sort of, and his wife. They sort of follow, still are following, Mother's traditions.

MJ: I'd say so. I realized when you were talking about after-Christmas-visiting, when people from the outside would come and sing…well, at Alec's [Alex K, Pauline's younger brother; at his home in Glendon, AB], Christmas day, that evening, Albert [Alec's son-in-law] is playing the [guitar], there is singing going on. It's actually…I was just thinking, oh, well, a lot of people, a big party, but it's actually very traditional. It's interesting to me. [Kay is in the background, nodding her head in agreement.]

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By way of example, to show that the K family continues to maintain its ritual observances, Pauline mentions her younger brother's current Christmas festivities in Glendon, the small town where he and his family—daughters, sons-in-law, grandchildren and great-grandchildren—reside. Alec and his wife Nellie are legends in the K family for their carefully planned and highly spirited Ukrainian-Canadian celebration of Christmas. From watching for the first star to the serving of twelve meatless dishes, most importantly *kutia*, on Christmas Eve, Alec and the gathered Ks do not waver from year to year. Christmas Eve is the time for family, and Christmas day and several days thereafter, the time for visiting, for having guests and for the singing of carols late into the night.[19] There is the untraditional nod as well, for Santa Claus drops by on Christmas Eve to dazzle the smallest grandchildren.

Pauline thinks of the K family as one that in a larger sense is still connected to the ritual activities of her parents and grandparents. True, she herself does not celebrate a Ukrainian-Canadian Christmas, nor has she done so for years. She married into a family of Dutch Protestant extraction and gradually learned to observe their rituals, as opposed to her own. But Pauline admires her brother and his family for still following their mother's and grandmother's Ukrainian-Canadian traditions.

Personal Narrative: Pauline (Calendar Ritual: Christmas caroling) #1

25 July 2003, pg. 4—Christmas carols (*Koliadky*)
PS: Now, I remember going to Grandmother's, but I think this was not Christmas Eve. Maybe it was Christmas Eve, where, we would all, this would be after supper, I'd say, we'd have dinner at home, all this food, the traditions. And then it was open house, like all night. And these men, all dressed up as Wisemen [the Three Kings or the Magi]. And I can remember being very scared of 'em, because they had white beards and canes. And they would knock and come in. And there would be maybe four, five of us, maybe more. And they would carol, say Christmas carols, the whole family sitting around. And when they sang, of course you gave them a drink. And by the time they went from one house to the other, and it would be two, three o'clock, they were pretty jolly. [laughter] So that, I remember.

MJ: Would that have been Christmas Eve or Christmas day.

PS: I think it was part of that, in that, like Christmas Eve was pretty much family….

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Like her elder sister Kay, Pauline's reaction to mummers is one of fear. She vaguely understands that sometime after Christmas Eve, men dressed as strange characters come into her grandmother's home, sing carols, drink spirits and make toasts, wish the family "good health," and then leave just as boisterously as they came. Because Pauline's recollection of the mummers is unprompted, for she is merely thinking of her childhood and of Christmas celebrations with her family and grandparents, she is probably correct to label some of the mummers "Wisemen." A group of Christmas carolers dressed as the Three Kings, or possibly Christ, Herod and other Biblical personages, may indeed have visited the K family during the Christmas season in Birmingham. It might be argued that Pauline is confusing Christmas-related activity with *Malanka*. However, the fact that Pauline remembers no devil, no goat, no figures from a *Malanka* troupe, suggests that she beheld neighbors singing Christmas *koliadky*.

Undoubtedly, Pauline was too young to understand that she was a witness to an Old Country tradition of Christmas caroling. The fact that the K family would have been visited between Christmas day and New Year's eve, during their residence in Saskatchewan, also points to their connectedness to the calendar ritual cycle and to community celebrants. Farms were far away from each other and in the winter, it would have required some effort for the role-playing *koliada* characters to stop by. The appearance of the Wisemen and others indicates that Maksym and Annie and the Ks were in-the-know about specific calendar rituals and included in their observance because of their acceptance in the Ukrainian-Canadian community.

Personal Narrative: Pauline (Calendar Ritual: *Iordan)*

> 25 July 2003, pg. 6-7—*Iordan*
> *MJ: Do you remember if your family celebrated Iordan?*
>
> PS: If you were sick, Holy Water, yes.
>
> *MJ: Now I think your grandmother did this.*
>
> PS: If you were sick, I don't know about Mother, but I know there was Holy Water, if somebody was very sick. Cross, you dipped your fingers [into the water making the sign of a cross] in a cross and you said your prayers. And that, you know, they're still doing that. When my daughter was very sick a few weeks ago, some of the church members came and they all prayed. And then, now they don't have only water, they have oil. And they did the same thing, and I said to my son-in-law, "My God! That rings a bell. That's just what grandmother used to do."
>
> *MJ: Is this a Ukrainian church?*

PS: No, no. They go to a Baptist church.

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The observance of *Iordan* from Pauline's perspective boils down to Holy Water, its usage in the K family. If someone were very sick, the Holy Water would be brought out. A finger was dipped into the water, the sign of the cross was made, prayers were said. Pauline does not indicate whether the Holy Water was ingested. She does not question the origin of the Holy Water: it simply was there when the family needed it, implicitly part of the family's life. And years later, when Pauline's adult daughter is gravely ill, Pauline observes her own family's Baptist minister blessing her by making the sign of the cross with Holy Water or Holy Oil. This startles Pauline into realizing that perhaps she is still connected to the rituals of her grandmother, they still hold meaning: "And they [the Baptist minister, the church] did the same thing, and I said to my son-in-law, 'My God! That rings a bell. That's just what Grandmother used to do.'"

Personal Narrative: Pauline (Calendar Ritual: Easter)

25 July 2003, pg. 7—Easter
PS: Isn't it Easter-time that they do that? No, no. Easter-time, that Mother would go and have all this food blessed? And you get that all year.

MJ: Did she make eggs? Did she decorate eggs?

PS: Yeah. Yeah, but she didn't do 'em as beautifully, but she did.

MJ: Did you help her?

PS: Yeah, but not very pretty.

MJ: So how would the family prepare for Easter…that you remember?

PS: It was sort of on the same [as Christmas], not quite as big. But the food was much alike. And you had mustard, wild mustard was very big. Was it mustard? [She is asking sister, Kay.] The white...

Kay: Horseradish.

PS: Horseradish. That was very important. And eggs, and bread, and *kubasa* [sausage], and what else? The family left, and had it blessed…five [a.m.]… early

> in the morning. And when you came back from church, that was the first food you ate, all our blessed food. And after that it was…
>
> *MJ: Would you go to church with your parents? Or would you wait at home for them to come back.*
>
> PS: Lotta times we went. No. I guess we would wait at home, because it was still cold. And don't forget there wasn't always a priest there…that someone took the place of the priest. Now I don't remember this in Saskatchewan. I remember this in Alberta. In Saskatchewan, I'm sure it would be even more, because there would be my grandparents and all my uncles and aunts.
>
> *MJ: When your parents came back with the food basket, would you sit around the table and eat everything in the basket or…?*
>
> PS: Prayers first. Always prayers. Same thing at Christmas time, Father would lead the prayers first, then we'd eat.

#####

Regarding ritual activity around Easter, it is the foods that seem to make the most indelible impression on Pauline, the foods in the blessed Easter basket. She struggles to bring to mind horseradish, but clearly sees the eggs, bread and sausage in the basket. However, lest one get caught up in thoughts of food, Pauline cautions, "Prayers first, Always prayers…Father would lead the prayers first, then we'd eat." Her emphasis on just how the K family celebrated Easter seems apt. Always, there were prayers invoked for ritual observance. The underlying reason for the ritual was consistently brought home in Pauline's narrative with her emphasis on ritual piety. Pauline expresses no rejection of the family's religiosity, she seems to accept it as part of the whole.

Personal Narrative: Pauline (Calendar Ritual: *Zeleni Sviata*)

> 25 July 2003, pg. 8—*Zeleni Sviata* [Green Holidays]
> *MJ: To go back, what about calendar celebrations, like Zeleni Sviata? Do you remember Green Sundays?*
>
> PS: You know, I hate to say this, but oh yes, it was a big thing. We got new clothes for this and everything. And the trees, oh, they looked so pretty. And I think we decorated inside the house with branches. *Zeleni Sviata.* Yes, and, what it meant, don't ask me.

> *MJ: Do you know if your mother had you cleaning the house?*
>
> PS: Oh, sure! It was a big event! You know. The place was cleaned up and, come that Sunday we'd have…it was regular food, but at least it was food that probably was special food. And you went visiting or somebody came to visit you. That was a holiday.

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Green branches were brought inside the freshly cleaned house, the home interior was decorated with them. Pauline's delight for the decorative aspects of this feast day is infectious. The house was arrayed with green, the family dressed in new clothes, food was laid out and the visiting began. For her, every holiday, or ritual observance, shared equal parts of prayer, food, joy, companionship and decorative beauty. And one senses that all this still exists for Pauline. Calendar ritual form and content may have changed, but the intent of ritual observance has not.

Concluding remarks on Pauline's personal narratives

The strongest currents in Pauline's narratives allude to K family prayer, the joyful celebration of calendar ritual and being surrounded by people, that is, a community orientation. Like her sister Kay, Pauline does not dwell on the details of ritual observance, for example, a fine forensic description of the family's celebration of *Iordan* or Christmas. Nevertheless, she communicates that the K family, along with the H family relations, was diligent and spirited about its observances of weddings, funerals, Christmas, *Iordan*, Easter and *Zeleni Sviata*. We would argue that Pauline takes the details of ritual observance for granted, as something second nature, because she has absorbed the ritual pattern and is inside of the intent of the ritual. For Christmas, she states that the anticipation she felt, "it wasn't the gifts: it was the tradition." In other words, for Pauline Christmas was a complex ritual celebration that involved a prayerful reverence for the coming of the Christ child, as well as customary Ukrainian-Canadian activities, steps in the involved ritual observance, all of which led to the climax of honoring Christ's birth. Thus, the family quickly finished the barn chores "because the cows talked." Then they waited for the first star to appear, sat down—"it was always prayers first"—to a meal of twelve meatless ritual dishes, and feasted. On Christmas day itself, the K family opened its doors to its neighbors, "there was company all day long, come and go," Pauline says.

The K family elders, the grandparents in particular, respect and validate the children's endeavors, encouraging joyfulness and providing a sense of stability. Pauline describes how, at Christmas, "we [the kids] had our own parties....Nobody told you, 'No, no, no!'" And both Pauline and Kay narrate a moment in time, when the sun illumines a particular spot, warms and melts the snow and, thus, facilitates their grandfather's playing hop-scotch with them. Surrounded by allowing adults, the K sisters absorb and accept their (the adults') ritual beliefs. Theirs is a world of inclusion, acceptance and interdependence. Only when adult protection lapses, does Pauline become critical, precisely because her experience has been that of protected connectedness to the family. Thus, she chides her elders for exposing her to Mrs. Worthington's blue face and to the frightening *koliadky* visitors who invade her grandparents' home.

Grandmother Annie H is a role model for Pauline. She is quick, practical, efficient, a hard worker and, according to Pauline, a woman who has high standards. That her entire adult life has been spent living in a log and white-washed stucco *khata*, Pauline calls it a "mud-hut," is somehow comforting to Pauline. Pauline could use the fact that her grandparents persisted in their life in the *khata* to their deaths in the 1940s as an opportunity to bemoan Ukrainian immigrant backwardness, as some would do. But instead, Pauline sees Maksym and Annie's maintaining their *khata* life, as a sign of steady consistency, rootedness, and something positive. Because Pauline absorbed Ukrainian-Canadian rituals, beliefs and ways of doing things, she can accept and embrace her grandparents' life.

However, Pauline also rejects certain aspects of what she wryly calls "tradition." In a spate of clever word-play, Pauline presents her father's adherence to spirited beverages, his ethno-centrism and his wanting to be waited upon, as somewhat unattractive features of K family life. She handles these negative aspects of life in the family lightly and with laughter. Nevertheless, Pauline is quite serious in her critique of less attractive habits embedded in K family behavior.

In a clear indication of Pauline's deep absorption and acceptance of Ukrainian-Canadian ritual observance as part of her family identity, she discerns present ritual behavior as something linked to her Ukrainian-Canadian past. When Pauline's seriously ill daughter is ritually blessed with Holy Water by her Baptist minister, Pauline realizes that this activity bears much similarity to *Iordan* and the obtaining of Holy Water and the use of it in times of grievous illness. Pauline also perceives that Christmas celebrations at her brother's home in Glendon have their origins in her own mother's Christmas ritual observances. She surmises that "my brother Alec, I'd say he sort of, and his wife. They sort of follow, still are following, mother's traditions." She is correct. However, the point to be made is that in a deeply integrated manner, Pauline continues to be connected to the shared system of beliefs of the K family.

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[1] In fact, the original K homestead with its *khata* (and original sheds) where the elder K siblings—Jack, Nellie and Pete— were born still stands. It is on the original homestead quarter-section that Andrew K purchased. This quarter-section is now owned and farmed by an H family member, as is the quarter-section that Andrew K purchased and moved his family to on the north edge of Birmingham. Andrew's Anglo-Canadian two-storey house and barn still stand on the Birmingham quarter-section.

[2] Describing what she remembers as a child, Pauline notes, "I do remember that like Sundays. We always had to get dressed up. Every Sunday, our best dress. Everything. Shoes. And you either waited for company or you went to visit. And quite often it would be Grandfather and Grandmother and uhmmm. The house we lived in had chairs on the porch, they'd sit there and the kids would, I remember crawling on their laps. They had dinner…meals, there was always meals. And Sunday was a day of rest. We were not allowed to do anything, but that was a holiday. You did not go hammer nails. We couldn't ...You were dressed and you were a lady for a day."
Interview with Pauline K, 25 July 2002, Edmonton, AB, p. 1.

[3] About Christmas and the gifts she received as a child, Pauline says, "And I sat there with my dollies. [laughter] I rocked those things. I would go by the heater and warm the blankets. I melted all the dolls' noses to keep their face warm. But I got my dollies. I quit with my dolls and went right into boys."
Interview with Kay K, 23 July 2003, Edmonton, AB, p. 18.

[4] Nellie K was married to Philip K on 11 October 1929.

[5] It is interesting to speculate that the words Pauline uses here, "the taking her," in reference to Nellie leaving her parents' home after her wedding, suggest a wedding ritual activity. Were a ritual capture and then the demanding of "ransom" enacted during Nellie's wedding observance? Pauline and her sisters are silent on this point.

[6] Philip was born in Wolyn, Russia, 14 November 1903. A veteran of the First World War, Philip immigrated to Canada solo.

[7] The K family had been in Glendon for less than a year at the time of Nellie's wedding. The establishment of their Alberta homestead had been fraught with problems and proved to be supremely difficult. Although the Ks had probably befriended most, if not all, of their Ukrainian-Canadian neighbors, it would appear that with a mere 20 to 25 wedding guests, the K family was not yet prepared to open its doors to the entire community.

[8] In Kay's narrative about Nellie's wedding, Kay says, "There was dancing and, you know, sure they did some of the Ukrainian-type of dancing, like the *hopak*, where they joined hands and cross their legs and squat, you know. There was that type of dancing." Whatever the actual dances were, Kay recalls "Ukrainian-type" dances.

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[9] In the R family, we observe Katherine, the elder sister, as a mother substitute for Alice. In the K family, we observe Nellie, the elder sister, as a mother substitute for Pauline.

[10] The only good time to interview Pauline was during her stay with sister Kay. I could not banish Kay from her own kitchen, where the interviews took place, but I did politely ask Kay not to interject while I was interviewing Pauline and vice versa. Kay and Pauline acted with great restraint, but there were moments when the two sisters simply had to join in together to underscore or to simply enjoy a point.

[11] This more frank and blunt attitude to death is traditional, according to Dr. Andriy Nahachewsky, scholar of Ukrainian folklore and tradition.

[12] When asked whether her parents would relate scary stories to the children, Kay states that their mother would bar such activity. Kay says, "No. We always went out of the room. Mother wouldn't let us…you know somebody would come [to visit]…and they'd tell stories…about things moving in the houses and things. Mother would always shoo us out of the house, out of the room…So we never…[she didn't want us to have nightmares.]
Interview with Kay K. 25 February 2000, Edmonton, AB, p. 3.

[13] Of course, Pauline's reflecting on the simplicity of her grandparents' *khata* is a relative statement on her part, for the *khata* was never a "mud hut" to Maksym and Annie. It was home and the sort of structure that they and their neighbors and relatives built and lived in.. But Pauline as an adult has lived in a beautiful, expansive lake-front home, thus from her adult perspective Maksym and Annie's *khata* seems modest. As a child, Pauline probably accepted the *khata* as *baba's* and *gido's* home.

[14] Maksym's son Nick built a small, one storey, wood-framed house, no larger than a traditional *khata*, next to the *khata* of his parents. Nick's wood-framed house still stands where he built it, on Maksym and Annie's original property. Unfortunately, Maksym and Annie's *khata* is gone. (K and H family reunion in Birmingham, SK, August 2003)

[15] The children probably taught their grandfather how to play hop-scotch. In her interview, Annie K also comments on her grandfather's playful side. She notes, "I found Grandpa kind of a happy-go-lucky person. I wasn't afraid of him. You know, I was afraid of my Dad, but I wasn't afraid of him. He was just a kind old soul. That's what I liked."
Interview with Annie K. 14 October 2002, Grimshaw, AB, p. 12.

[16] The term "*horilka*" is what Ukrainians call their version of what Russians call "vodka." Whether *horilka* and vodka are the same spirited beverage, we will not venture to discuss. Personal experience suggests that the two liquids are quite similar, if not the same, differing only by the amount of turpentine added for flavor. The term "*horivochka*" is a diminutive form of *horilka*, and could well be the derivative term for "hori-wootch-ka."

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[17] As Pauline related her narrative to me with Kay in the room, there was no question in my mind that she was mimicking her child-self, taunting the neighbor woman behind her back. It has been suggested that perhaps Pauline was reciting the lines of a song. This may be another layer of content in the narrative.

[18] Although viewed positively, ethno-centrism can be characterized by a love of one's own [family, clan, village, region, etc.], wanting the best for one's children, fear of the unknown and a reliance on tradition. These are strong peasant characteristics, born out of a necessity for caution and thus, conservatism.

[19] We speak from personal experience, for Christmas of December 2000, my husband and I experienced the K family celebration in Glendon. There were in excess of twenty-five family members who sat down to a Christmas Eve dinner of the twelve meatless dishes. The ceremony began with prayers and with *kutia*. Three doughnut-shaped braided breads, each larger than the next, stacked wedding cake style and topped by a burning candle graced each end of the long dining table. Dishes were passed around the table, quietly, thoughtfully and with some excitement. By the time the meal ended and "Santa" arrived, the three-day orgy of eating, drinking, visiting other family and friends, singing and listening to Cousin A. and his musical compatriots play their guitars, had begun.

Annie K

In many ways the interview with Annie K was probably the most difficult of all of the interviews in this dissertation. Although she was not averse to being interviewed, and indeed, was mildly curious about the whole procedure, Annie did not appear to see the point of it. Perhaps this was due to the fact that we did not know each other—I was the niece who grew up several thousand miles away and in a different country—and that Annie wanted to visit, not to talk about the past.

Under Kay's facilitating umbrella, we—my husband, Kay, and I—had conspired to spend Thanksgiving weekend (October, 2002) with the 90-year old Annie, her son and daughter-in-law in the Grimshaw and Peace River area of Alberta. Annie lives in Grimshaw; her son and his family live twenty minutes away in Peace River. The six-hour drive north through slush and snow gave added respect for the largeness of the province and just how scattered, geographically, a family can get.

We were pleasantly surprised to find a mellow, snowless autumn in progress on the high plain where Grimshaw is situated. The air was cold and full of golden leaves. Annie's pink ranch-style house accommodated her large collection of knick-knacks—completed craft projects—and easily absorbed three guests. We were quickly introduced to the basement sports bar and adjacent guest bedroom, the former *sanctum sanctorum* of Annie's now deceased husband.

Annie is an energetic, quick woman. Her kitchen is sparkling clean; every dish, pot and pan washed and put away after each meal. There is no automatic dishwasher in her home. Her yard is well-tended, her garden, spotless. Annie prides herself on having grown-up a tomboy. Her youthful best friend was Uncle Harry, her age-equal. Annie and Harry were both born in 1912. Annie is five years older than her sister Kay, and seven years older than her sister Pauline. She is the fifth of the ten K siblings. She married a Ukrainian-Canadian, colloquially known as "Shorty," who established himself as a grain-buyer.

They traveled about northern Alberta with his work and came to sink roots in Grimshaw, also the beginning-point of the Klondike-Yukon Highway.

Annie thrives on activity. There is her volunteer work, there is her club-related work; Annie serves as president of the local ladies club—and after her house chores are done there is bingo night or an occasional Euchre tournament. Getting Annie to simply sit and talk, particularly if she feels she needs to be a hostess, is not an easy task.

For two days, I, the guest-niece, waited to interview Annie. I wanted her to get to know me a bit, to feel comfortable talking with me. We all played a Scrabble-like game far into each night, laughing raucously over Kay's habitual snatching "victory out of the jaws of defeat' with a deft and simple word combination. But finally, the morning before we left, when it seemed a good time to interview Annie, it wasn't. She couldn't possibly have anything to say that might be of interest for a tape recorder and a dissertation.

With Kay and myself gently disagreeing with Annie, we proceeded into an interview. Ideally, the interview should have been between Annie and myself, but Kay seemed to be a comforting influence in the living room. Annie clearly had no reluctance speaking with Kay as a listener; Her reluctance was with me. It could have come from the fact that I was simply too much of an outsider for her or that she truly wants to withhold this material from the world. Kay's voice is interwoven with Annie's in the interview. For the most part, Kay and I tried to let Annie's voice come forward.

I would have preferred to simply sit and let Annie talk, but in light of my research interest, I needed to direct some questions to her. In this contest, a somewhat rigid question and answer format emerged.

Personal Narrative: Annie (Calendar Ritual: Miscellaneous)

14 October 2002, pg. 11—Storytelling, narratives in general, uncle in particular.
MJ: Do you remember any stories that your elders would tell you that scared you?

Annie: Oh, Grandpa was a champion, but I don't know what stories. But he used to scare us… the shit out of us by telling them.

Kay: One of the ways to shut you up!

Annie: He would…and we would just sit there and we'd, Harry [Maksym's youngest child] and I, would just be going to bed.[1] He would tell some *awful* stories. They were kind of ghost things that he would tell…He loved doing that and we knew better, and yet we'd go back and back again.

Kay: Yeah, that was his kind' a bedtime stories.

Annie: They were *horrible* stories.

MJ: Were they historical stories or like, real fantasies…?

Annie: Well, it was stories that frightened me. I don't know what kind. I just know I was scared silly.

Kay: I think they were…if I remember correctly…he told stories about the Old Country and ghosts. It was all ghosts.

MJ: Mavki? Vesalki? Mavki were dangerous spirits…

Annie: I don't remember any details. All I remember is that he told me horrible stories.

Kay: He told a lot of stories about spirits, evil spirits and stuff like that.

MJ: Do you have a sense that…did he and your grandmother…did they believe in any of these spirits? Were there things that they did to protect themselves from these spirits? Or to protect you from these spirits?

Kay: No, I don't think so. They were very strong Catholics. I think that was just Granddad…that was his line, his fantasy.

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Annie has nothing to say about rites of passage among the Ks. Annie does, however, have some recollection of storytelling among her elders. She maintains that her grandfather Maksym "would scare the shit out of us by telling [stories]." Annie likes to speak in a frank and colorful manner, somewhat in keeping with her tomboy persona. She also projects an unselfconscious pride in the daring it took for her to experience the thrill of danger inherent in Maksym's stories. Kay tries to fill out the picture by adding that Maksym's bedtime storytelling was "one of the ways to shut you up!" Thus the two sisters seem to indicate that their grandparents were fairly successful at child-control. The "horrible" stories Maksym told "about the Old Country and ghosts" holds the children rapt. They love being scared and Maksym loves to be sharing some of his Old Country lore. And perhaps his ulterior motive is to settle the children down for the night. The image Annie projects is heartwarming. An old man surrounded by wide-eyed, speechless children, listening to his every word. Of course, Maksym is the same person who teaches and coaches his children and grandchildren through their prayers.

Annie and Kay allow Maksym to scare them, but know ultimately that they are safe with him. A figure of no small respect—he was a "champion"—for Annie, Maksym offers an environment of security, so much so that the terrifying content of his stories is forgotten and only the moments of connection with him are recalled.

Personal Narrative: Annie (Calendar Ritual: Easter)

> 14 October 2002, pg. 14—Easter
> Kay: Oh, Easter. That was a big "do"…
>
> Annie: You didn't eat…before you went to church. There was fasting.
>
> Kay: That's what I was going to say. And Grandmother and Grandfather, they fasted for a whole week, because that's what *The Bible* said. But for us kids, it was just torture. You know, you couldn't eat meat, you couldn't eat…what did we eat?
>
> Annie: Nothing. Milk products. But nothing with any fat in it. Just …we could have fish. So really, they kept a tight tradition….But of course, this is the beauty of the Ukrainian thing…that you could eat *perogies*, and stuff like that, but no meat. So when Christmas Eve come and you got salmon, I'd just always remember that. The best thing on …[the table].

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With some prompting from Kay, Annie turns to the topic of Easter. Kay begins with the opening, "Oh, Easter, that was a big do." She is interrupted by Annie, who takes the words right out of her mouth. Kay is left remonstrating: "that's what I was going to say." Perhaps we are observing a bit of sisterly competition. For Annie, the central point of Easter would seem to be the fasting that took place before the holiday. Hers is a practical mind and any nostalgia or romance for some of the more interesting details of Easter ritual observation, do not occur to Annie. Ukrainian-Canadian Easter ritual activity is reduced to "fasting." Annie seems to concur with sister Kay, when Kay adds that this fasting is "torture."

When Kay asks, almost rhetorically, "What did we eat?" Annie again leaps to the fore and responds crisply, "Nothing." The K sisters—in actuality, the entire K family— share a robust sense of humor, which is evident throughout their narratives. Annie is no slacker in her use of humor, her dry wit and light cynicism bring home exactly what Annie has to say about K family ritual injunctions around Easter. It would seem that Annie does not entirely approve of the lengths to which Maksym and Annie H go, in terms of fasting to prepare themselves for Easter. And Kay notes that the grandparents are strict literalists with regard to ritual behavior. She reports that Maksym and Annie "fasted for a whole week, because that's what *The Bible* said." Annie quickly softens her sarcasm by adding that "milk products" were eaten but "nothing with any fat in it." And thus she intimates that she is aware of the details of ritual observation, for example, the Lenten fast before Easter required that any foods containing animal fat be avoided. Annie goes on to mention that her grandparents "kept a tight tradition," that is to say, that Maksym and Annie H were careful to follow the ritual steps that resulted in the proper observance of Easter. This is a value judgment on Annie's part and Maksm and Annie H seem to come out on the positive side. Her pride in the serious manner in which her grandparents approach Ukrainian-Canadian ritual observation is evident.

In an amusing and down-to-earth vein, Annie K offers yet another opinion. She states that "the beauty of the Ukrainian thing…[is] that you could eat *perogies*, and stuff like that, but no meat." Thus, she insinuates that Ukrainian food is perfectly suited to Ukrainian-Canadian rituals. If fasting means that you cannot eat meat products, this should not be a problem, since you can eat *perogies,* which *a priori* contain no meat products. *Perogies*

—potato and cheese-, sauerkraut-, and fruit-stuffed dumplings—do, quite thoroughly, keep hunger at bay. Annie's philosophical approach is, indeed, a novel approach to the validation of cultural mores.

As for Annie, she waited for the twelve meatless dishes of Christmas Eve with opportunistic pleasure and when she saw the dish containing salmon, she would satiate her hunger lust. One took opportunities as they were presented, salmon being clearly at the top of the opportunity list.[2]

Personal Narrative: Annie (Easter and Miscellaneous Ritual)

> 14 October 2002, pg 15—Easter and Holidays in general
> Kay: Oh, yeah. These kind of holidays were very sacred to Grandmother [Annie H]. Oh, God, you didn't dare blink an eye…they were *very* religious. You didn't laugh; you didn't do anything. And you always had to give up something for Lent. Like you couldn't go to dances. You had to give up some food…rich food in your diet. She was very, very religious.
>
> *MJ: So she was...*
>
> Kay: Grandmother sort of ruled. When you think of it, she was such a tiny person. But when you think of it, she controlled all of us. Yes, she did.
>
> Annie: Yes, she did, because she was kind. Her approach was good. That's what I liked about Grandma. She never screamed at you or pushed you. That's why we minded her, because she never got cranky.
>
> Kay: She always had a…
>
> Annie: You know if somebody [challenged me]…I know that I'd sure buck. [She laughs]
>
> Kay: She always had a *babushka* on and always an apron. She was always very careful.

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In Kay's opinion the Ukrainian-Canadian calendar rituals, such as *Zeleni Sviata*, revealed how religious her grandmother was. Kay says, "these kind of holidays were very sacred to Grandmother." They were strictly enforced by her— "you didn't dare blink an eye…you didn't laugh, you didn't do anything…." But instead of presenting grandmother Annie H as a religious tyrant, Kay admits to amazement that such a tiny woman should lead the whole family, through firm resolve and as an exemplar.

On the topic of grandmother Annie's leadership role, Annie joins in. Issues of leadership interest her. She is herself a leader, president of several local organizations. In Annie's opinion, her grandmother's success in the family and particularly among her numerous grandchildren is due to her "approach." Grandmother Annie is "kind," never "cranky," and "she never screamed at you or pushed you." From this, one can infer that there were those who screamed at Annie K and who pushed her, trying to get her to do something. Obviously, the "approach" didn't work on her. She readily admits this; "You know, if somebody [challenged me]…I know that I'd sure buck." And indeed, in the K family, according to sisters Kay and Pauline, Annie developed a reputation for tomboyish rebelliousness and for running away to Maksym and Annie H's place in order to avoid her mother's or her eldest sister Nellie's, injunction to work. Annie was and remains "a force of nature." The K family acknowledged and included such "forces."

Annie's narratives, ostensibly about ritual observation in the K family, are essentially a dialogue between two sisters. Yet, Annie and Kay pull in different directions. Kay fondly attempts to describe their grandmother. But Annie repeatedly interrupts Kay to show how she —Annie K— is different from their grandmother. Whereas, grandmother Annie H was kind and placid, even when challenged; granddaughter Annie K pushes back when challenged. By her interruptions, Annie K reveals her independent streak and implies that she must be handled properly, or else she'll "buck." Embraced by her sisters, but acknowledged to be a character, Annie K is a force of nature who plays by her own rules.

Annie's narratives show that there are elements of contrast among individuals within the K family and that the K family worked to incorporate "differences." A manifestation of family identity is revealed here in the relationship, the back-and-forth between these two sisters in direct relation to the perceived identity (and personality) of their grandmother.

Concluding remarks on Annie K's personal narratives

Above all, Annie indicates that the K family is an all-embracing group. Out-spoken and idiosyncratic individuals such as herself, are quite naturally included in the mix. Her narratives add texture to relationships among the Ks. In particular, she draws the kindness and quietude of her grandmother forward and shows her adeptness in handling the swirling current of young people around her.

Like her sisters, Annie gives few concrete details concerning ritual observance, but nevertheless, she marks its ubiquitousness in K family life. Her awareness of ritual observance prompts Annie to classify her grandparents as individuals who keep a "tight tradition." In Annie K's younger days, when Maksym and Annie H set the ritual priorities for the clan, Annie K would have been privy to much of what they modeled. Later, Annie's parents would have followed in the ritual footsteps of Maksym and Annie H. Thus, Annie K may grumble at certain inconveniences brought on by adherence to ritual observance, but she does not question the K family's embracing of ritual. Rebelliousness aside, Annie K has absorbed ritual content from her elders and as with Kay and Pauline, the form is familiar enough to be taken for granted, but the interior of the ritual, its intent, continues to carry meaning.

Although Annie's narratives do not allude to the community orientation of the K family, her own community activism in Grimshaw would seem to hint at a K family influence carried forward into her life.

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[1] Harry H is Maksym's youngest child. Born in 1912, Harry H is the age-equal of Annie K and five years older than her sister Kay, born in 1917. As a son of their grandfather Maksym, Harry H is thus the uncle of Annie K and Kay K. The girls' mother, Anna K, is the eldest child of Maksym and his wife Annie H.

[2] It may be that Annie's recollection of salmon as one of the twelve meatless dishes for Christmas Eve has roots in more recent Christmas Eve observances. When Annie was a child in Birmingham, or even later as a teenager in Glendon, whitefish, jack fish (northern pike), and pickerel were the common fish, more or less locally caught and frozen for later use. Store-bought herring were also served for the holiday meal. Salmon would have been quite unusual as a holiday dish during Annie's youth.

Comparison of Personal Narratives

This dissertation is composed of two assumptions that function as complements to one another. On one hand I try to show that personal narratives are a means of observing how aspects of family identity are expressed and transmitted. On the other hand, I try to show that personal narratives based on ritual observance intensify the focus on how key aspects of family identity are expressed and transmitted. I argue that the personal narratives of the R and K sisters reveal highly meaningful interpretations of events that occurred in the distant past and that continue to resonate in the present day. I have selected these narratives in the context of rituals—rite of passage and calendar rituals—because rituals (observed and not observed) reveal how the shared beliefs of a family are carried and transmitted. Thus, relative to the rituals that the R and K sisters observed or gradually ceased to observe, their narratives describe, refashion and reveal, sometimes consciously and sometimes less consciously, their respective family identities.

First, I will begin with the R family. From the personal narratives of the R sisters regarding ritual observance among R family members, I can reasonably infer certain aspects of R family identity that seem to hold true across the narratives of all the R sisters. First and foremost, the Rs communicate that school (education) is more important than church (religion). And their unstated definition of church (religion) incorporates the attitude/belief that Ukrainian-Canadian ritual observance, particularly calendar rituals, are part and parcel of what it meant to be religious, that is, the church cannot be trusted not to indoctrinate and manipulate for its own ends. And, as a corollary, for the Rs, government, like the church, cannot be trusted not to manipulate for its own ends. Nancy R reflects this most clearly. Her dedication to fight politically on behalf of farmers' rights[1] has some of its foundations in a general mistrust of (institutions) government. As a logical result of the rejection of the corpus of Ukrainian-Canadian rituals in their lives, the R sisters give voice to the belief that religious-based ritual is not operative for them; it has little meaning and thus no function. Among the R sisters, regular church-goers are few and far between.[2]

The R sisters, with some consistency, question the need to mark calendar rituals and rite of passage rituals. For the Rs, ritual activity is directly associated with church influences, and hence to be resisted. Nancy, Vera and Alice all maintain that their mother, their parents, and their family were "not religious," "not church-going," and "not superstitious." And somewhat obliquely, Katherine states that "it is the peasants really, who establish rituals, or invent or remember or believe in them."[3] The point is not whether the R family is or is not "religious" or "superstitious," but that the R sisters consider themselves far-removed from their Bukovynian peasant origins, and repeatedly make a point of denying "superstition" and "religious practice."

In view of scholar Robert B. Klymasz's interviews and research in the Ukrainian-Canadian communities of east central Alberta, it is possible that this family "trait" may have deeper roots for the Rs than mere disapproval or church customs. Among his researches, including Soda Lake where the R family once resided, Klymasz indicates that there could well have been, in all probability, a loosely-based stereotype afloat of Bukovynian immigrants as backward and superstitious.[4] Klymasz interviewed Ukrainian-Canadians of Maria's generation seeking out aspects of ritual belief and retention. Based upon his interviews, Klymasz formulated a list of seemingly accepted and somewhat prejudicial features of the average Bukovynian and the average Galician immigrant.[5] That Klymasz could derive his chart of characteristics from the neighbors and age-equals of Maria R, would seem to indicate that such attitudes existed around her and that she would have been aware of them.[6] As a family with Bukovynian origins, the R family seems to have incorporated into its identity messages, a statement against such a stereotype. If people of Bukovynian extraction were thought to be "superstitious," the R family was definitely not that. Indeed, the Rs created a family-identity message that set forth that they were adamantly "not-superstitious."

Among the R sisters, it is Nancy who, ostensibly quoting her mother, says "Mother was critical of the church—that it wasn't doing enough to educate people."[7] She hits upon a key theme in the R family, which the R narratives project as an aspect of family identity, and that is, that education is the most important thing one can have. It would seem that for the Rs, standing opposite from the pursuit of education and school, are superstition and church (religion). Through the voice of Maria, the Rs fault the church for not educating individuals in the community; moreover, they seem to see education as a family responsibility, extended to both genders, given that the boys' first obligation is to work the farm. This is not to say that the K sisters communicate the opposite. Quite the contrary, for the K family, schooling was considered highly valuable, but within the strictures of the immediate community, and for the boys before the girls.[8]

The repetition of the theme of not being religious and not being superstitious is multi-vocal among the R sisters. In reflecting upon christenings, Nancy sets forth that "we were never indoctrinated [by the church]."[9] Her sister Vera, recalling a christening in the R family, describes the priest's blessings as "mumbo jumbo."[10] Nancy notes, in the context of describing her wedding, that "my parents weren't religious—they'd go to church once in awhile."[11] Alice, when asked about the R family's ritual activity at Christmas, responds that "I don't think mother and father were superstitious."[12] Likewise, Vera in reflecting upon the ritual observation of Christmas says, "We weren't that…Some of the other people were more…I guess, superstitious." And later in the same narrative, Vera adds, "You know, we weren't, mother and father weren't as church-going and religious, so they didn't follow everything the way other people, like the Ls would, stuck to the Old Country things."[13] However, Vera's voice is tinged with some uncertainty, for she does acknowledge that her elder siblings recalled a time when the R family brought a calf into their *khata* at Christmas and walked it around, which infers an earlier adherence to "superstition" and "religion." When asked whether she remembers the observance of *Iordan*, Alice responds in the negative, saying, "…Mother [and father] were not religious;"[14] whereas, Nancy, describing the manner in which the R family observed *Iordan*, says, "My mother didn't put as much faith in the blessed water. She wasn't religious. I never saw her pray."[15] Yet, in thinking upon Maria's ritual preparations for a possibly dying Vera, Vera wonders that, "Mother was not a superstitious person. That's something I don't understand. They came from the village with all those other people. And yet…."[16] At least one of the R sisters, Vera, wonders at the anti-superstitious stance taken by her mother, for it would seem uncharacteristic of the milieu in which she grew up. Vera infers that Maria was *a priori* "not a superstitious person." We know this not to be the case, however, it does indicate the impact of Maria's self-stated position, or the R family's determination to be perceived as modern and progressive.

Yet the narratives of the R sisters show a pentimento of ritual observance and belief related to religion and church in the R family. For example, Vera maintains that baptism was important because, "if you weren't baptized, the priest wouldn't give you a burial."[17] Katherine presumes that when Vera was a desperately ill child, her mother used holy water to forestall her possibly dying; Katherine says, "I'm sure she [mother] was reaching for *everything* [to keep Vera alive]."[18] Nancy, Katherine and Vera all note that their mother set out lighted candles for the dead or for the possibly dying. Vera relates how her mother saves the *Ivana* wreath of herbs, presented to her father on his name day, Maria has explained that the herbs will help to protect against illness. It is possible that Maria has retained the wreath, believing in part that the wreath will indeed do what folk wisdom and belief counsel it will. Nancy recounts how her mother has prepared the costume in which she wishes to be buried in accordance with funerary ritual. Nancy says, "I know that she [mother] had plans to be buried in her Ukrainian clothes that she was saving. They were actually, the fabric had been hand-woven. She was saving that for herself."[19] And so, just as her mother (Elena) before her has carefully planned her funerary attire, so does Maria. From the details shared in various narratives, I can ascertain that the R family did indeed enact the calendar rituals of Christmas, *Iordan*, Easter, *Zeleni Sviata*, *Ivana* and an occasional *khram* and they celebrated these calendar rituals in the context of home and church. Thus, they were, according to their own definition "superstitious" and "religious" and "stuck" to the Old Country ways or ordering their spiritual lives.

Nevertheless, I see that in their narratives, the R sisters are suspicious of church intentions, even resentful of them. In speaking of the christening ritual, Katherine recounts how her mother had to stay in the church's vestibule before she could enter the church and be blessed to reenter the religious community. She says, "I remember resenting it very much. I was very angry. I felt they were being cruel….I also resented the screen in the church. Only the men could go behind the screen. The women were too sinful."[20] I have already noted Vera's reducing a priest's blessing, as she describes it, to mere "mumbo jumbo" in the context of a christening. For her part, Nancy criticizes church and clergy for relegating new mothers to the church's unheated foyer while they wait to be forgiven of their sin of pregnancy.[21]As a counterpoint, in the narratives of the K sisters, I see an acceptance of church intentions and genuine participation in church (religious) activities. Kay probably summarizes the family attitude best when, in recalling *Zeleni Sviata*, she says "the walls washed and all the bedding changed, and of course, and again, you got something new and it had to end with church."[22]

The R sisters also imply that ritual observance involving the church took place in the R family only on special occasions, such as Easter for example. Additionally, according to the R sisters' narratives, the R family tended to accede to the minimum of ritual observance in order to avoid ostracism in the circle of the Soda Lake community. Nancy suggests that R children were christened, in part, because "in those days, you'd be called a heathen if you weren't baptized. You'd be ostracized. It was one of those things that you did, whether you agreed with it of not. It was pressure from the community and the church."[23] Vera attributes christenings, in part, to the fact that the priest would not bless you at your death unless you had been baptized. She says, "They baptized or christened children when they were babies because of the high mortality rate. That was very important! If you weren't baptized, the priest wouldn't give you a burial."[24] Regarding ritual activity around Easter, Nancy describes how her mother designs simple *pysanky* "because she had to have those [eggs] to take to church to be blessed....it was a tradition that you followed, because you had to have those eggs for blessing."[25] Nancy insinuates that social and church pressure induced her mother to create *pysanky*. And by way of being present for calendar observances, Vera notes that unlike their gregarious neighbors, the L family, who "went to every holiday [*khram*], every holiday [*khram*] they had someplace to go," the R family did not, as a rule, attend *khrams*.[26]

A second aspect of family identity that the R sisters convey, is that analytical thinking is highly valued, that is, being cognizant of and sensitive to details, using information authoritatively, is a positive, and therefore an encouraged, family attribute.

Among the R sisters, ritual observance is described at some length, with an eye to the exterior (intellectual, analytical) details, not the interior (intuitive, at the level of meaning) details. There is a careful authority over information, in part linked to a respect for good clear thinking, that is expressed in this insistence on descriptive detail. In terms of calendar rituals, for example, Katherine recalls the family "beliefs" regarding the observation of Christmas. She begins by noting that "we really believed, when we were little, that the cattle understood what we said at Christmas Eve because they were there when Christ was born in the stable." [27] Katherine goes on to say that on Christmas Eve, "the day, well of course we fasted….And then we broke the fast with wheat." And here, she means that the fast was ended with *kutia*. She then fills out the scene; she says, "We spread hay, especially under the dining room table. Fragrant hay, because that was in the stable." And then, in a general way, she describes how her brothers would go caroling the evening of Christmas day, carrying a star-shaped lantern, which they had made out of "paraffin paper…and put a candle in it."

Nancy describes the R family's observance of *Iordan*, noting correctly that the calendar ritual marked "the ending of the Christmas season"[28] and that "Christ blessed the water on that day."[29] Thus, Nancy infers that she is aware of and or partly knows the Ukrainian-Canadian calendar ritual schedule of days. She relates that one or both of her parents would go to the *Iordan* service at church, taking water in a bottle to have it blessed. Upon their return, "we children would take a sip of the blessed water before our *Iordan* dinner." And with some attention to the practical details of ritual observance, Nancy reveals that because good containers were scarce, her grandmother "kept a whisky bottle with blessed water in it. She had a bouquet of herbs attached to the bottle." This bouquet would have been used to sprinkle the holy water about, in a sense to decant the liquid.

Vera speaks of *Ivana* and how guests brought a "big" wreath of herbs for her father's name day observance, "and they tried to crown father" with the wreath.[30] Later, her mother explains to her that "if you put it [the wreath] around, the herbs in it would help to protect against illness, say, if they were infused in water or laid on the body." Vera's sister Anne describes the use of hemp oil at Christmas; she says, "we'd take the hemp to some man who had a mill and he'd make hemp oil. And we'd use [hemp oil], instead of butter at Christmas. We weren't supposed to use butter at Christmas."[31] Alice recalls that for Easter, the family took *pysanky* and Easter bread to church, waited to have the food blessed, "and then we went home and the blessed food tasted so good, 'cause we were hungry by then because we were fasting."[32] In their personal narratives, the R sisters, particularly Nancy and Katherine, are richly descriptive of calendar and rite of passage rituals in which they participated. However, their ardor, their connectedness to family through ritual, the reaffirmation of belief that could come with cyclical ritual observance is not addressed. They are silent on these points.

The R sisters in their narratives show that they understand the propriety of ritual, that is, a ritual needs to be enacted by a particular individual(s), in particular circumstances and locations, and requires certain steps containing various symbolic parts; in other words, with ritual there is a correct way to do things, or the ritual is diminished. Alice, without naming or possibly knowing what the viands are, reports that her mother prepared "the requisite number" of ritual dishes for Christmas Eve.[33] Katherine observes that for a funeral, keening is expected; she says, "it's expected of a parent or a relative to keen and to wail and to talk about the story [of the deceased's life]."[34] And Vera reports that funerary behavior required that "of course, you didn't show proper remorse if you didn't wail or cry."[35] Nancy, for her part, is upset that funerary ritual rules have been breached in the circumstances of her mother's death. No commemorative dinner (luncheon) is held after Maria's burial. Nancy says, "But if they [her brothers] didn't invite…then they should have, because *that was a custom*. There was no announcement for a luncheon. That was a custom."[36]

Finally and again, in their narrative style I can reasonably infer that, as an aspect of family identity, the R sisters perceive themselves and others in the R family to be insular. Their connection to community is more intellectual than social; that is to say, that the R sisters convey that their family does good works in the community—school, church(es), community hall, but is not effortlessly, socially, a part of it. In their narratives there is little or no mention of others in the Soda Lake community, although I am aware that there are "superstitious" Ukrainian-Canadians out there who the R sisters do not identify with. Vera registers surprise and a certain wistfulness that the closest neighbors, the L family, are regularly invited to the *khrams* of near-by church communities; whereas, her family rarely has an outside *khram* to attend. Groups of people from within the community, that is, those who join in at a family christening, a funeral or who spiritedly try to "crown" the R family patriarch with an herbal wreath for *Ivana* elicit a kind of indifference or a sense of alarm from the R sisters.

Now I turn to the K family, assessing the K sisters with regard to these same family issues. The K sisters convey that school (education) is important as an aspect of family identity, but not to the exclusion of church (religious/ritual) activities. From their personal narratives, I can reasonably infer a both/and situation, rather than an either/or situation. As a logical result of the inclusion of church (religion) and of the corpus of Ukrainian-Canadian rituals in their lives, the K sisters give expression to the belief that religious-based ritual is valid and operative for them; it has meaning and function. In point of fact, the K family continues today to observe *provody*, to cook *kutia*, and in a reflective manner have their *paska* baskets blessed at the small onion-domed churches, familiar to them, that dot the (east central) Alberta prairie.

From the K sisters, I see the observation of Ukrainian-Canadian ritual as a positive attribute. In their narratives, the K sisters do not question that their family marked calendar rituals and rite of passage rituals. To them, it seemed part of the rhythm of their lives. With the advantage of grandparents who absorbed the K siblings into their family patterns, the K sisters early on had role models who, with exuberance and deep reverence, showed them a way Ukrainian-Canadians could be Ukrainian-Canadians.

After all, it was Maksym and Annie who spread hay throughout their *khata* to a depth of half a meter for Christmas, to the utter delight of their grandchildren. Annie K refers to her grandparents' manner of ritual observance as "tight," "tight tradition," she says. Even though new ways of enacting rituals appeared, for example the K family incorporated a Christmas tree into its celebration of Christmas, there seems to have been flexible acceptance of new ritual material and little questioning the need for or the meaning of ritual.

The K sisters in their narratives recount the many calendar rituals involving the church that were spiritedly observed by the family. Christmas Eve, Pauline distinguishes as "*the* biggest day" and not because of the gifts, "it was *the tradition*," she says.[37] Kay reports that for the K family, Christmas, Easter and *Iordan* were "very religious, very religious…Everything was, Christmas was holier-than-thou. And Easter, you know, you went to church with your basket."[38] The holy water that their mother kept with care in the bottom of her bedroom wardrobe, was obtained annually at *Iordan* services. Easter, and Christmas as well, always involved praying. "Prayers first. Always prayers," Pauline says.[39] As already noted, Kay summarized K family calendar observance in speaking of *Zeleni Sviata*; "it had to end with church and you either got company or else you were invited out to somebody's place."[40]

In contrast to the R sisters, the K sisters' personal narratives are not as richly descriptive of the rituals that touch their lives. The value of expressing an authority over information, by the careful descriptive detail of it, is not a central concern for the K sisters. I do not learn from the K sisters how they enacted the ritual observance of, say, Easter, but I do learn that beyond taking their *paska* basket to church to be blessed, they regarded Easter as "very, very holy" and as a relief from the self-imposed deprivations of Lent.[41] The K sisters do infer that calendar and rite of passage rituals were deeply integral and an important part of their lives. During their youth in Saskatchewan, the K siblings were part of their grandparents' circle of influence. I know, from an outside source—that is, from Harry H, the age-equal of Annie K—that his parents Maksym and Annie H observed Christmas rituals with religious devotion and great attention to ritual detail. The K sisters were participants in their grandparents' ritual observation, as well as their parents' ritual observation. They know explicitly and implicitly how Christmas or Easter or a funeral or a wedding was celebrated among the K family. Of Christmas, Pauline says that it was not the gift(s) that she received that brought on her excited anticipation of the calendar ritual, "it was the tradition."[42] By this she seems to mean that for her, Christmas was the sum total of all of the activity around it—prayers, symbolic acts—such as watching for the first star of Christmas Eve, food, family, community, church. Of *Iordan*, Kay says that the holy water that her mother kept in the dresser-closet, "we never touched it. We were not allowed."[43] Thus, she intimates that she and her siblings respected blessed water and its properties because the parents did; the belief in the specialness of holy water remained active. Later, she says, "every holiday, [you] looked forward to...," explaining that, for example, for *khram*, the Ks would sweep the house, wash everything down, get dressed up, go to church and visit with the community.[44]

For the K sisters, the symbolic content of certain ritual observances continues to resonate in their lives. For example, Pauline draws a comparison between the manner in which her mother would use blessed water if someone in the family were very sick, and a recent time when her own daughter was quite ill. She says, "Cross, you dipped your fingers [into the water making the sign of a cross] in a cross and you said your prayers. And that, you know, they're still doing that. When my daughter was very sick a few weeks ago, some of the church members came and they all prayed. And then...they did the same thing, and I said to my son-in-law, 'My God! That rings a bell.' That's just what Grandmother used to do."[45] It would seem that for Pauline, there is a straight link from ritual belief (and practice) that her grandmother accepted, to that incorporated in a great-granddaughter's healing process. And Kay, whose marriage took place twenty-seven years after the wedding of her eldest sister, registers surprise and delight, that for her wedding her elderly parents put up balloons and probably *topolia*; Kay says, "And here's Dad, well in his eighties. And he's got all these trees decorated... in the yard."[46] Although Kay is unclear about the symbolic import of the poplar trees, used as welcoming beacons for a Ukrainian-Canadian wedding, she knows that they link her wedding to that of her elder sisters and in a sense, bind her lovingly into the K family and thus, continue to carry meaning. For the K sisters, the symbolic language of ritual enactment carries relevant meaning; whereas, for the R sisters, this language is less meaningful, but nevertheless an interesting, even colorful, artifact.

As an aspect of family identity, companionship both inside and more importantly, outside of the family is highly valued, and therefore sought. In contrast to R family identity, among the Ks, there is no family-given merit to be derived for critical or independent thinking. This is not to say that K family members do not think critically or are not independent thinkers; it is simply to say that there seems to be no specific (expressed) family value which attaches itself to critical or independent thinking as a sought-after attribute.

K family members express, as an aspect of their family identity, a tendency to be joiners— gregarious, outgoing and community-oriented. They rely on siblings, and on others related to them, for trusted friendships, though without relying heavily on family members for emotional support. That having been said, K family members apparently extend support among themselves to be individuals. For example, Annie K is a bit of a tomboy-maverick who is nevertheless entirely embraced by the K family.

In one final telling comparison, if I were to compare the R sisters' attitude about their grandmother's beliefs and stance toward ritual observance with the K sisters' attitude about their grandparents' beliefs and stance toward ritual observance, I might discern a crucial distinction that conveys family identity. The R sisters are uncomfortable with their grandmother, Elena. Although she has lived with them, and although both Katherine and Anne had lived with her, the R sisters reflect in their narratives that Elena is a stranger to them. They run the gamut from mildly amused to horrified—"it could be dangerous," Nancy says— with regard to Elena's belief in the healing powers and her active use of *Iordan* blessed water. As children living with her, Katherine and Anne are fearful around Elena and apprehensive that ghosts and spirits do lurk in the sounds of creaking doors or wood beams. When she keens at the funeral(s) of her son(s), only Katherine is struck by Elena's ritual command. As an elder who represents a particular way of ordering belief and of interacting with the environment, Elena (her model) is rejected in favor of the more progressive and outspoken Maria. Yet Katherine seems to retain certain magical beliefs about nature[47] which may be an inheritance from Elena.

For the K sisters—what they reflect in their narratives—grandparents Maksym and Annie seem to represent refuge and joy. Staying with the grandparents requires serious dedication to one's prayers, but the reward is closeness and a license to play. Calendar rituals are a highly important part of the yearly cycle and the K sisters simply adore the manner in which Maksym and Annie enact these rituals. In a narrative recalling their *khata*, Pauline asks Kay, "Did they ever move out to anything else?" And Kay responds that, no, Maksym and Annie lived in their *khata* until they died there. Pauline concludes, "Grandmother and Grandfather never, never gave it up. So that was nice, that they could die there, too."[48] Pauline intimates that it is of some comfort to her, that her grandparents "never gave it up." But what is this "it" that Maksym and Annie never relinquished? Obviously, the *khata*, but, for Pauline "it" is also everything that her grandparents stand for in her mind, not only where they lived, but who they were.

When I arrived to Edmonton to begin my graduate studies in 1999, I was warmly greeted and drawn into activities by the various segments of the third generation K family, daughters and sons of K sisters or brothers, relatives whom I had not known previously. I was struck by the manner in which these cousins, aunts and uncles celebrated or observed rituals that had foundations in the dynamic of Ukrainian-Canadian ritual observance. I had never heard of *provody* and certainly had never participated in its activities before coming to Canada; yet among K family members, *provody* was an important yearly ritual commemoration.

I have celebrated Christmas and Easter my entire life, but had no knowledge of twelve meatless Christmas Eve dishes and certainly had never heard spoken, nor seen written, the word *kutia*. Obviously, I had not tasted the dish. And for Easter, I had no idea that a family carefully prepared various highly specific foodstuffs, placed them in a basket and took them to a church service to be blessed in a particular way. The same could be said of *khram*. All of this became familiar to me as I circulated among the K family.

By way of contrast, R family members in Alberta, although cognizant of Ukrainian-Canadian ritual celebrations, did not seem to take an active or involved part in them. During my years in Edmonton, I observed no specific Ukrainian-Canadian activity among my R family relations, that is, no attempts to participate in *provody*, *khrams*, or to acknowledge Christmas or Easter with ritual foods or activities. R family members in the United States, my mother among them, also allowed their Ukrainian-Canadian ritual activity to atrophy.

In general, the Diaspora patterns of the first wave of Ukrainian-Canadian families and subsequent familial tradition and ritual observances follow similar routes. What distinguishes the disbursal paths of these specific two families can be seen most clearly in their collective (or family) perspectives on ritual observance. The point to be made is that this difference in focus—the outlines of continuity on the K family side and discontinuity on the R family side—continues to fascinate. To be sure, there are numerous variables at work, but through the lens of ritual observance, it is possible to see how, through personal narratives a family's core sense of self is expressed, in this case how one family group maintained its connection with Ukrainian-Canadian ritual activity and another let it go.

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[1] We have noted earlier, in our essay on "Nancy," that she became an activist and an advocate for farmers' rights. In 1953, she ran for a seat in the House of Commons on the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation ticket from her riding in the Vegreville district. See endnotes #2 and #3 in the essay on "Nancy."

[2] Only Anne R has become an off-and-on member of the Unitarian Universalist religious denomination.

[3] Interview with Katherine, 28 April 1994. Refer to page 101 of the dissertation.

[4] Klymasz's study, *Sviéto: Celebrating Ukrainian-Canadian Ritual in East Central Alberta Through the Generations*, addresses Bukovynian and Galician variants in the expression and observance of folk rituals, customs and beliefs. The geographical area of his study includes Soda Lake, which lies between Andrew and Two Hills and south of Willingdon, Alberta. See Appendix D: Maps, pages 227-235, of his study.

[5] The chart on page 168 of Klymasz's study outlines some of the differences that he considers exist between Bukovynian and Galician attitudes and characteristics in relation to Ukrainian-Canadian folk rituals, customs and beliefs. In the category that Klymasz calls "Nature of belief system," the scholar's data lead him to the conclusion that the nature of the belief system for Bukovynians is "superstitious;" whereas the nature of the belief system for Galicians is "pragmatic." Klymasz has derived his conclusions from interviews with 104 informants who are recalling their youth and the struggle that they and their parents had to establish homesteads during the period between 1890 and 1930. Some of these informants were neighbors of the R family in the Soda Lake area.

[6] Historian Martynowych alludes to local attitudes about Bukovynian immigrants when he discusses the problems of establishing community schools. According to Martynowych, "it is very difficult to determine the extent of such resistance [to schools], but is was more common than some historians care to admit. Perhaps nothing reflected the lack of unanimity better than the numerous exhortations and injunctions in Ukrainian newspapers to send children to school. *Svoboda*, *Kanadyiskyi farmer* and *Ukrainskyi holos* were frequently alarmed by the numerous letters which described the opposition to schools or denied the need for an education. Concerned settlers like Wasyl Romaniuk and Peter Svarich [who lived in the neighborhood of Soda Lake, in Vegreville] of Alberta filled the Ukrainian press with desperate pleas to build schools....Svarich was especially troubled that in 1911 only one-third of Alberta's Ukrainian population had schools and only four Ukrainian children in rural Alberta had gone beyond the fourth grade. Bukovynians, it seems, were especially opposed to schools. 'Bukovynians fear schools like the devil fears holy water' was a common refrain at the time. Yet Galicians were not much better. Referring to all Ukrainian settlers, Michael Stechishin insisted that at first '90 per cent of our farmers opposed the organization of school districts'" (Martynowych 1991: 343-44). One additional note, Maria R was an avid reader of the Ukrainian newspapers.

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[7] Interview with Nancy, 5 May 1995. Refer to page 131 of the dissertation.

[8] The K siblings attended the schools in their immediate community and most of them graduated from high school. No special treatment was extended to the first son in the K family (as it was in the R family). Among K siblings, the third eldest, Pete, excelled at studies and did go beyond the high school level to study for a year in college. However, the opportunity of schooling beyond the high school level was not the lot of most of the K girls. One exception, Kay had the good fortune to be funded through business college by a generous employer.

A number of the R siblings were sent beyond their immediate community to attend school, beginning with the eldest, Alex, at age fourteen. Alex was sent to Vegreville to complete grade eight, because the community's school could not provide this grade and hence, the entrée to high school. In Vegreville, Alex "received the award of a bronze medal by His Excellency the Duke of Devonshire, Governor General of Canada as the candidate receiving the highest marks in the Vegreville Inspectorate at the Public School Leaving Examination held in July, 1919" (Al's Story 2002: 58). With such a distinction, there was no question that Alex would go on, and thus, at some expense to his parents, he was sent to Victoria High School in Edmonton for his high school degree. He went on to Normal School in Calgary, taught for a few years in small community schools (where Ukrainian-Canadian children predominated) in east central Alberta and then moved on to DePaul University in Chicago, later transferring to the University of Chicago to receive a degree in Accounting.

Among the R sisters, Nancy was held back, but the others graduated from high school. Vera, in particular, excelled as her brother Alex had excelled. She received the award of a bronze medal from His Excellency Lord Willingdon, Governor General of Canada, and Lady Willingdon, this, as the candidate receiving the highest marks in the Hairy Hill Inspectorate at the Public School Leaving Examination. Vera was the first Ukrainian-Canadian woman in Alberta to receive such an award. Vera continued with Normal School and then began to teach. Anne was sent to Vegreville to high school and then went on to a year of college, a rare opportunity for a young Ukrainian-Canadian woman at the time, attending the University of Alberta in Edmonton. Katherine was sent to Vegreville and then to Edmonton for her schooling.

[9] Interview with Nancy, 5 May 1995. Refer to page 131 of the dissertation.

[10] Interview with Vera, 25 March 1995. Refer to page 165 of the dissertation.

[11] Interview with Nancy, 11 May 1995. Refer to page 136 of the dissertation.

[12] Interview with Alice, 25 January 2003. Refer to page 204 of the dissertation.

[13] Interview with Vera, 17 January 2003. Refer to page 178 of the dissertation.

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[14] Interview with Alice, 25 January 2003. Refer to page 205 of the dissertation.

[15] Interview with Nancy, 25 February 2001. Refer to page 149 of the dissertation.

[16] Interview with Vera, 25 March 1995. Refer to page 168 of the dissertation.

[17] Interview with Vera, 25 March 1995. Refer to page 167 of the dissertation

[18] Interview with Katherine,25 February 2001. Refer to page 108-109 of the dissertation.

[19] Interview with Nancy, 26 May 1995. Refer to page 145 of the dissertation.

[20] Interview with Katherine, 14 May 1994. Refer to page 76 of the dissertation.

[21] Interview with Nancy, 5 May 1995. Refer to page 131 of the dissertation.

[22] Interview with Kay, 25 July 2003. Refer to page 285 of the dissertation.

[23] Interview with Nancy, 5 May 1995. Refer to page 131 of the dissertation.

[24] Interview with Vera, 25 March 1995. Refer to page 167 of the dissertation.

[25] Interview with Nancy, 26 May 1995. Refer to page 151 of the dissertation.

[26] Interview with Vera, 25 March 1995. Refer to page 173 of the dissertation.

[27] Interview with Katherine, 28 April 1994. Refer to page104-105 of the dissertation. All quotations in this paragraph in which Katherine is speaking of Christmas are taken from this particular interview.

[28] Interview with Nancy, 26 May 1995. Refer to page 148 of the dissertation.

[29] Interview with Nancy, 25 February 2001. Refer to page 149 of the dissertation. Nancy's description of *Iordan* is taken from this interview and from the interview that took place on 26 May 1995.

[30] Interview with Vera, 17 January 2003. Refer to page 185-186 of the dissertation.

[31] Interview with Anne, 14 January 2003. Refer to page 220 of the dissertation.

[32] Interview with Alice, 21 March 1997. Refer to page 209-210 of the dissertation.

[33] Interview with Alice, 21 March 1997. Refer to page 202 of the dissertation.

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[34] Interview with Katherine, 28 April 1994. Refer to page 94 of the dissertation.

[35] Interview with Vera, 25 March 1995. Refer to page 171-172 of the dissertation.

[36] Interview with Nancy, 26 May 1995. Refer to page 145 of the dissertation.

[37] Interview with Pauline, 25 July 2003. Refer to page 311-312 of the dissertation.

[38] Interview with Kay, 25 July 2003. Refer to page 265 of the dissertation.

[39] Interview with Pauline, 25 July 2003. Refer to page 316-317 of the dissertation.

[40] Interview with Kay, 25 July 2003. Refer to page 285 of the dissertation.

[41] Interview with Kay, 7 February 2005. Refer to page 282-283 of the dissertation.

[42] Interview with Pauline, 25 July 2003. Refer to page 311-312 of the dissertation.

[43] Interview with Kay, 25 July 2003. Refer to page 278-279 of the dissertation.

[44] Interview with Kay, 25 July 2003. Refer to page 284 of the dissertation.

[45] Interview with Pauline, 25 July 2003. Refer to page 315-316 of the dissertation.

[46] Interview with Kay, 25 July 2003. Refer to page 251 of the dissertation.

[47] We see this in her adult-self's concern for poplar saplings, cut to decorate her parents' homestead for *Zeleni Sviata*. Katherine is loath to abandon any plant, regardless of its health, for the spirit of the green must be respected and nurtured.

[48] Interview with Pauline, 25 July 2003. Refer to page 306 of the dissertation.

Conclusion

The hypothesis of this dissertation is based on two assumptions: first, that personal narratives are a useful means to observe how aspects of family identity are expressed and transmitted; and, second, that personal narratives based on ritual observance sharpen the focus on how key aspects of family identity are expressed and transmitted. The overarching purpose has been to examine the formative effects of personal narratives on family identity, "how stories give direction to lives," as Rosenwald and Ochberg assert (1992:6). Stated a bit differently, as Fiese *et al* express it, "how narratives about personal experiences could be considered a central aspect of the family's attempt to make sense of their social world" (1999: *v*). In this sense, I have hoped to show, as Fiese *et al* themselves concluded, how personal narratives about the family "move beyond the individual and deal with how the family makes sense of its world" (1999: 3).

Having asserted this, it is important to note that in the cases of the R and K sisters, it is not so much how they, as family members, made "sense" of the world so much as how these personal narratives reveal differing stances taken by the two families to cope with and overcome the presented obstacles in their world. The distinction is subtle, yet precise. These were immigrant families for whom the ritual observances that had bound and comforted them in the Old Country became somewhat burdensome in a new land and under the pressure to become part of a new and rather daunting culture. The imperatives were contradictory—on one hand how to preserve the sustaining values of an old support system, while on the other hand adapting to and embracing a new one.

My hypothesis combines personal narratives and ritual observances as a unified means to understanding the underlying nature of how family identity develops. I maintain that key elements that shape the family identities of these two groups, the Rs and the Ks, are revealed in their contrasting attitudes towards ritual observation and belief. "Family stories [personal narratives] provide a unique opportunity to consider how individuals interpret whole family processes as well as how family dynamics may influence individual members. The recurring presence of routines and rituals in many of these stories [narratives] speaks to what families actually do together, reinforcing the importance of understanding the 'narrative ecology of family life'" (Fiese & Pratt 1992: 412).

In support of our first assumption, I assert that personal narratives—like family stories—reflect essential aspects of the systemic nature of the family; they are part of "a family's narrative ecology" (McAdams 2004: 247). My second assumption asserts that ritual observance also conveys family identity. It is through ritual observance that a family's shared beliefs are carried and transmitted; it is through ritual observance that family bonds are reaffirmed. The rituals that a family chooses to celebrate (observe) serve to convey to its members who they are and how they fit into the scheme of the family system, and additionally, how the family fits into the community in which it lives. As such, in their observance or in their breach of observance, rituals possess a constitutive function—communicating, negotiating and renegotiating family identity (Pratt & Fiese 2004: 17). This constitutive function is what this dissertation has attempted to reveal.

For the purposes of this dissertation, it is very important to draw the distinction between ritual and ritual observation. The ritual, in and of itself, is somewhat of an absolute, a precise series of steps that encompass an entire event from beginning to end. As Dr. Andriy Nahachewsky has described them: rituals are "prescriptive." In contrast, ritual observations, however Platonically perfect in their prescriptive form, are by necessity subject to interpretation. They are "descriptive."[1] The ritual observed is always subject to personal or situational conditions (the "ecology" of the culture). Ritual observance can range on a scale from one-hundred percent observance to zero percent observance. In part, this dissertation reflects how ritual observances show the gradual diminution of Old Country rituals and their impact on family identities. What is critical to note, however, is how the personal narratives do show that the observances, in whatever form, reveal family identities in a process of transformation. In this sense, these personal narratives can be considered cultural objects. Even though they are memories or fragmentary episodes of experience, they nevertheless reflect, in their associations, known and experienced events that are linked to specific rituals.

The narratives about ritual observance that the R sisters and the K sisters have related in their personal narratives do indeed reflect essential aspects of the systemic nature of their respective families (McAdams 2004: 247). Through their narratives, the R sisters infer that the Rs valued school (education) more highly than church (religion) or Ukrainian-Canadian ritual observance, which for them was simply an aspect of church. The K sisters in their narratives infer that although education is important in the family, it is not important to the exclusion of church. Theirs is a both/and situation, not an either/or situation. The K sisters suggest that there was and is genuine participation in church (religious) activities among the Ks which points to an acceptance of church intentions and of Ukrainian-Canadian ritual in family life. The R sisters intimate that the church cannot be trusted: it has the capacity to manipulate and to indoctrinate for its own ends. Indeed, institutions such as church and government cannot be fully trusted.

Questioning the need for Ukrainian-Canadian ritual observance, the R sisters collectively deny any adherence to superstitious, Old Country, ways. They do accede to following some Old Country practices, but this, only in order to avoid ostracism in their Soda Lake community. The K sisters do not question Ukrainian-Canadian ritual observance in their lives. For them, religious-based ritual is valid and operative, it has meaning and function which continues to resonate in their lives. For the K sisters, observing Ukrainian-Canadian rituals is a positive family attribute.

Among the R sisters, analytical thinking is a valued attribute. Their narratives tend to be couched in descriptive language that reveals their predilection to analysis and to analytical thinking. In talking about the Ukrainian-Canadian ritual observances of their youth, the R sisters show that they have learned the outward formulas of the rituals: they can describe ritual steps. Among the K sisters, they infer that there is no particular family value placed upon analytical thinking. The descriptive content of their narratives is less fulsome than that of the R sisters, however, the K sisters communicate a deep connection to ritual observance in their narratives.

The narratives about ritual observance are revelatory with regard to R and K family orientation towards community. In the case of the R sisters, they suggest that the R family's community orientation tended to be political in tone, rather than social. The K sisters denote the importance of social integration for the K family. They transform the social and ritual exuberance of their grandparents and parents into contemporary ritual observance. The R sisters intimate that they have more or less rejected the model of their grandmother, Elena, who maintained devout and magical beliefs couched in Bukovynian ritual practice. Instead they have turned to the model of their mother, who has aligned herself with a progressive outlook, for Maria, tantamount to a rejection of "superstition."

It is significant to my hypothesis—personal narratives relating to ritual observances reveal aspects of family identity—that McAdams, Pratt and Fiese, and others are dealing with ritual observances that are intact within the subset community and that are sustained by the families observing them. In this case, I am examining the transformation of ritual observance by the K family and the erosion of ritual observance by the R family. The Rs are in the process of sloughing off Ukrainian-Canadian ritual observances as they become assimilated by a new culture and adopt that new culture's more dominant rituals and mores.

What is valuable here are the family portraits, communicated in personal narratives, that remembered and sometimes barely remembered ritual observances provide. These personal narratives reveal fragments of a once-unified cultural ecology—the world of Bukovynian or Galician villagers in the nineteenth century. These fragments, revealed in the personal narratives, are all that remain of collective family identities that once held these rituals close to the core of interaction, both within the family and within the community—exactly, in fact, as scholars like McAdams, Pratt or Fiese describe.

But the breaking up of this ritual core did not occur simultaneously or even similarly among the Ukrainian-Canadian immigrants. What the shards of that cultural ecology reveal are the formative aspects of the decline of observance and the decline of the collective identity certainly on the R side of the equation. As for the K family, we observe adaptation and transformation around the ritual core.

That families derive group (collective) meaning from ritual observance is not in question. Family members talk (indirectly) about this aggregate meaning in their personal narratives. The personal narratives aid in the creation of a family identity—in the minds of the narrators, that is, they project this identity outwards—this identity evolves over time and integrates lived experiences with meaning-making processes. If we can factually assert that "family rituals involve ongoing, patterned social interactions that serve to stabilize the family and provide meanings and expectancies for its members" (Pratt & Fiese 2004: 6), then we can assert that the opposite is equally true—family rituals that are no longer ongoing lose their features, thus denying certain kinds of meanings and expectancies for its members. Nevertheless, partial observations and fragments of ritual observances continue to imbue a sense of family identity—creating new meanings and new expectancies that, even though much of the original meaning of the observances has faded or been forgotten, the function of them as unifying characteristics remains. I have hoped to show this in the context of personal narratives about ritual observance. What these personal narratives reveal is twofold—the value of personal narratives as vectors of the transmission and expression of family identity and the role of ritual observance in the development of family identity.

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[1] Dr. Nahachewsky has used these terms in a personal communication with the author.

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Appendix:

R and K family trees, maps and photographs

The R Family

Elena + **Ivan S**

(b. 1861, **Chornivka,**, d. 1947, **Edmonton**) (b.1859, **Chornivka,**, d. 1897, **St. Paul, Alberta**)

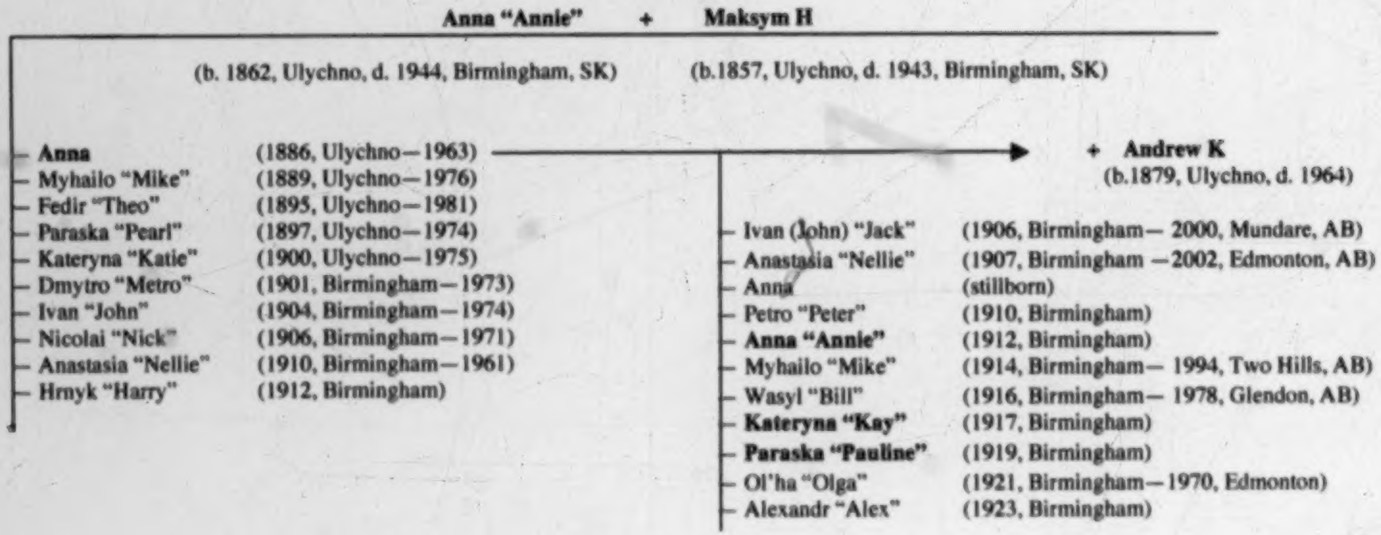
Zoiitsa	(1883, d. Chornivka as infant)
Maria	(1884, Chornivka —1970, Estevan, SK) → + **Ivan "John" R**
Heorhiy	(1887, d. Chornivka as infant)
Konstantyn "Gus"	(1888, Chornivka—1918, Soda Lake, AB)
Domka	(1890, d. Chornivka as infant)
Aleksandr "Alex"	(1892, Chornivka—1914-15?, Colville, WA)
Wasyl "Bill"	(1894, Chornivka—1920, Soda Lake, AB)
Nikolai "Nick"	(1897, Wostok, AB—1961, Edmonton, AB)
Domka	(1898-99—1901-02, Wostok, AB)
Unnamed boy	(b. d. 1907-1912?, Colville, WA)

+ **Ivan "John" R**

(b.1875, **Molodia** d. 1938, Vegreville, AB)

Alexander "Al"	(1904, Soda Lake-2005, W. Palm Beach, FL)
Simion "Sam"	(1905, Soda Lake-1987, Fort Wayne, IN)
Wasyl "Bill"	(1907, Soda Lake-2005, Surrey, BC)
Anastasia "Nancy"	(1908, Soda Lake)
Kateryna "Katherine"	(1910, Soda Lake)
Anna "Anne"	(1912, Soda Lake)
Heorhiy "George"	(1914, Soda Lake)
Veronia "Vera"	(1916, Soda Lake-2004, Bloomington, IN)
Lisovata "Alice"	(1919, Soda Lake)
Maria Margareta	(1921, Soda Lake)
Volodymyr "Walter"	(1924, Vegreville, AB)

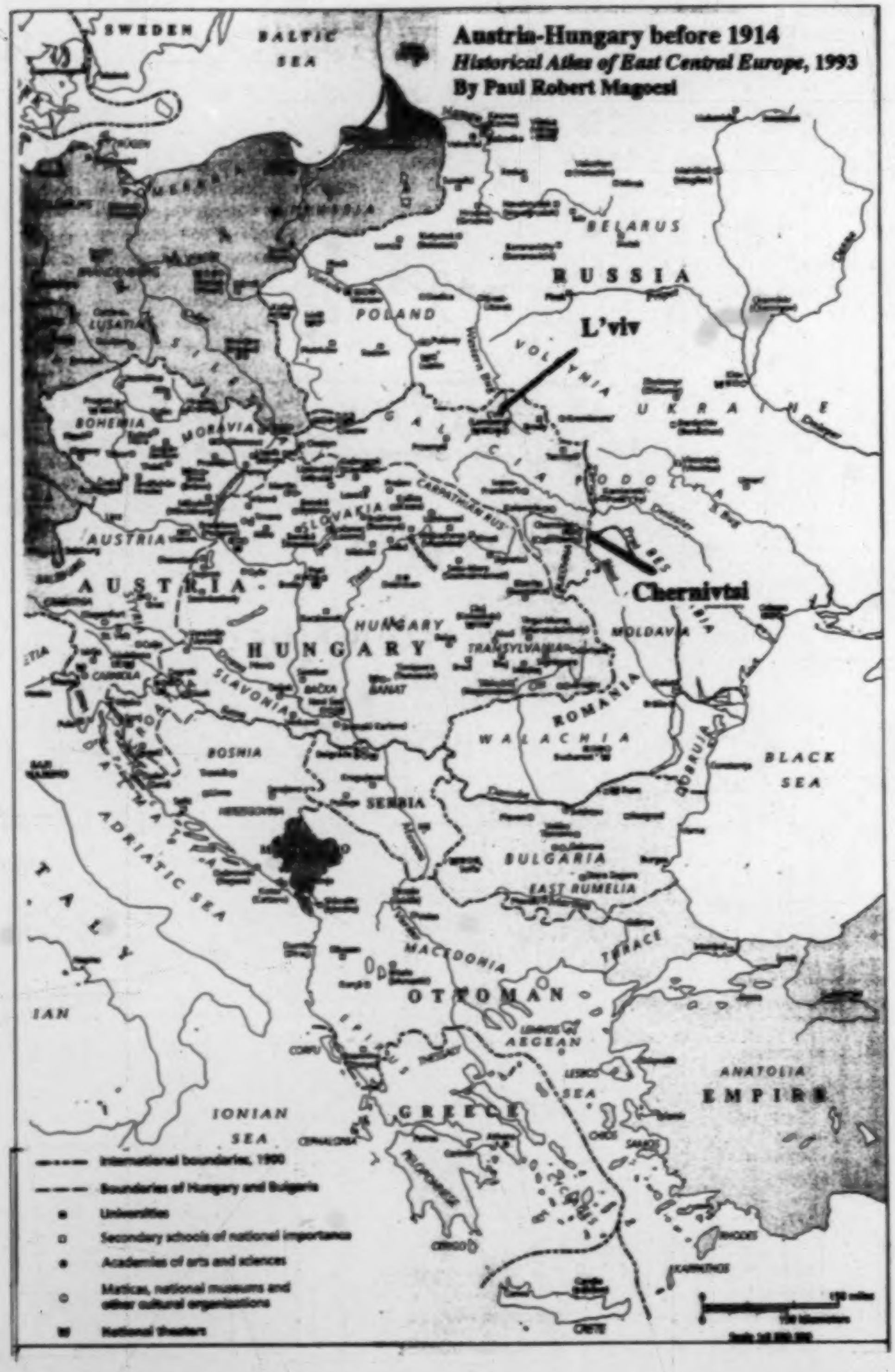
The K Family



Anna "Annie" + **Maksym H**

(b. 1862, Ulychno, d. 1944, Birmingham, SK) (b.1857, Ulychno, d. 1943, Birmingham, SK)

- **Anna** (1886, Ulychno—1963) + **Andrew K** (b.1879, Ulychno, d. 1964)
  - Ivan (John) "Jack" (1906, Birmingham— 2000, Mundare, AB)
  - Anastasia "Nellie" (1907, Birmingham —2002, Edmonton, AB)
  - Anna (stillborn)
  - Petro "Peter" (1910, Birmingham)
  - **Anna "Annie"** (1912, Birmingham)
  - Myhailo "Mike" (1914, Birmingham— 1994, Two Hills, AB)
  - Wasyl "Bill" (1916, Birmingham— 1978, Glendon, AB)
  - **Kateryna "Kay"** (1917, Birmingham)
  - **Paraska "Pauline"** (1919, Birmingham)
  - Ol'ha "Olga" (1921, Birmingham—1970, Edmonton)
  - Alexandr "Alex" (1923, Birmingham)
- Myhailo "Mike" (1889, Ulychno—1976)
- Fedir "Theo" (1895, Ulychno—1981)
- Paraska "Pearl" (1897, Ulychno—1974)
- Kateryna "Katie" (1900, Ulychno—1975)
- Dmytro "Metro" (1901, Birmingham—1973)
- Ivan "John" (1904, Birmingham—1974)
- Nicolai "Nick" (1906, Birmingham—1971)
- Anastasia "Nellie" (1910, Birmingham—1961)
- Hrnyk "Harry" (1912, Birmingham)

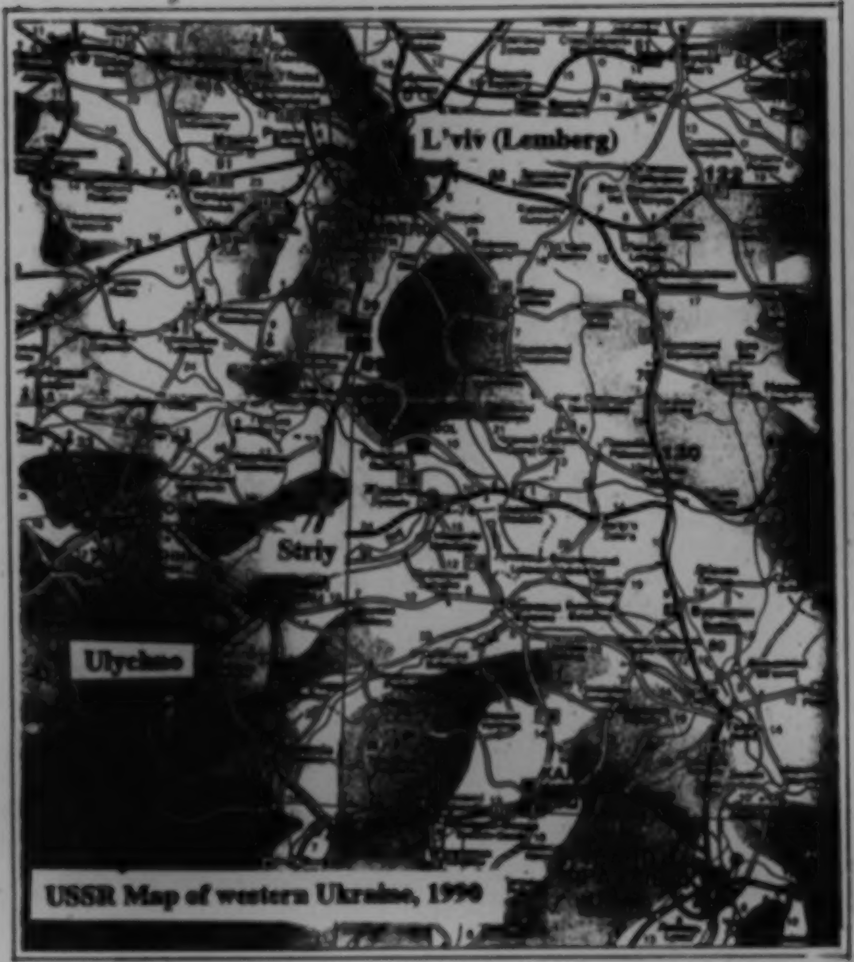


Austria-Hungary before 1914
Historical Atlas of East Central Europe, 1993
By Paul Robert Magocsi

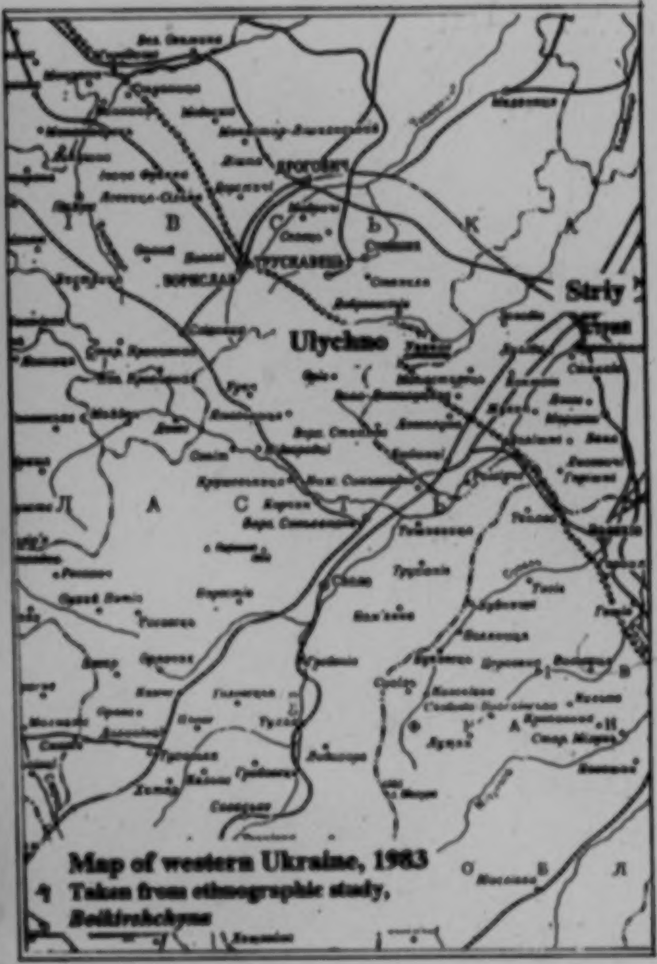
L'viv
Chernivtsi
SWEDEN
BALTIC SEA
BELARUS
RUSSIA
POLAND
VOLYNIA
UKRAINE
GALICIA
PODOLIA
BOHEMIA
MORAVIA
SILESIA
LUSATIA
SLOVAKIA
CARPATHIAN RUS'
AUSTRIA
HUNGARY
TRANSYLVANIA
MOLDAVIA
BESSARABIA
ROMANIA
WALACHIA
SLAVONIA
BACKA
BANAT
CARNIOLA
BOSNIA
DALMATIA
SERBIA
BULGARIA
EAST RUMELIA
DOBRUJA
BLACK SEA
ADRIATIC SEA
ITALY
MACEDONIA
THRACE
OTTOMAN EMPIRE
ANATOLIA
AEGEAN SEA
GREECE
EPIRUS
IONIAN SEA
CORFU
CRETE
RHODES
KARPATHOS
International boundaries, 1900
Boundaries of Hungary and Bulgaria
Universities
Secondary schools of national importance
Academies of arts and sciences
Maticas, national museums and other cultural organizations
National theaters

Chornivka
Chernivtsi

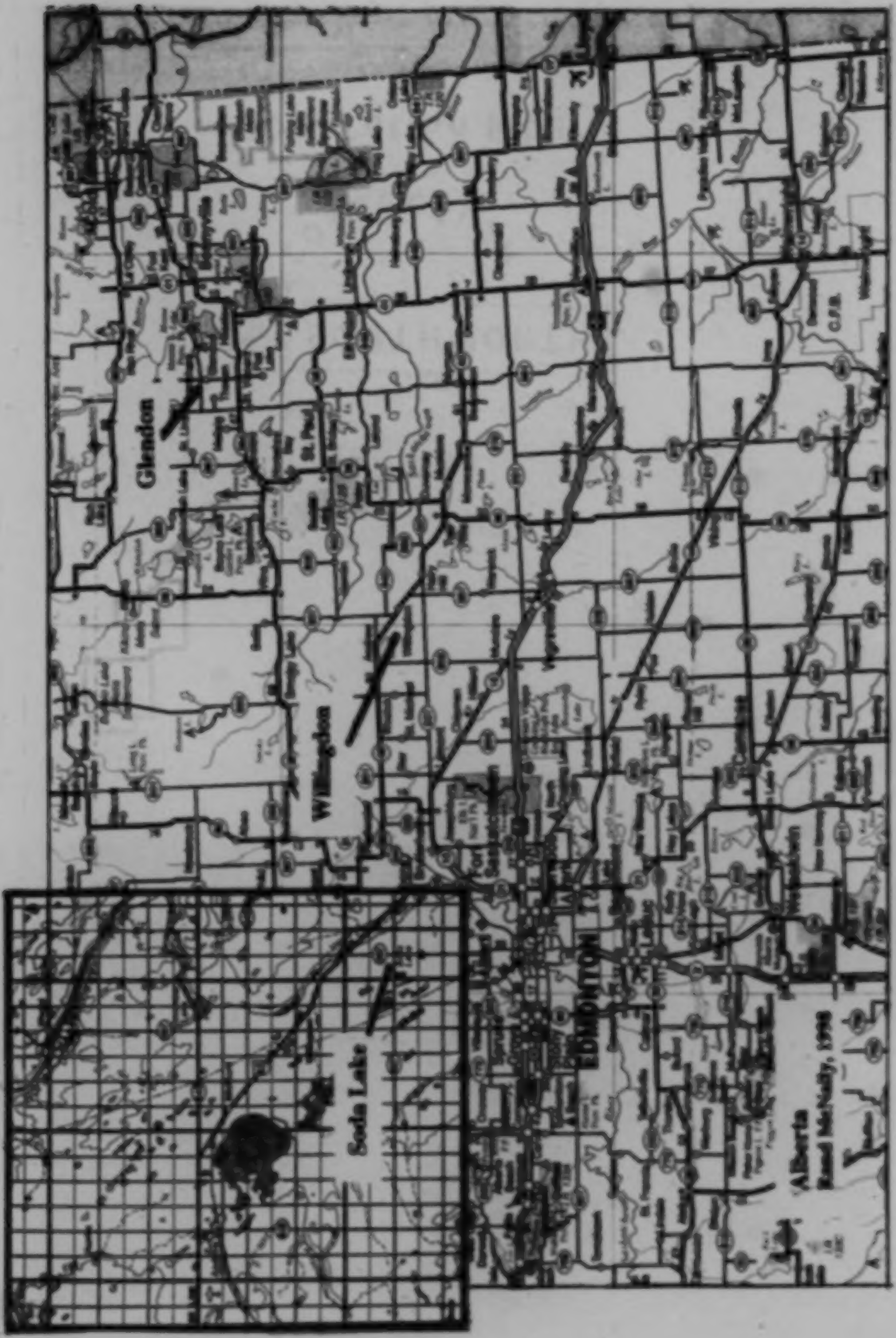
Austria-Hungary, 1914
Detail of Northern Bukovyna
Czernowitz, Zone12, Kol. XXXIV
Map in collection at Rutherford Library,
University of Alberta

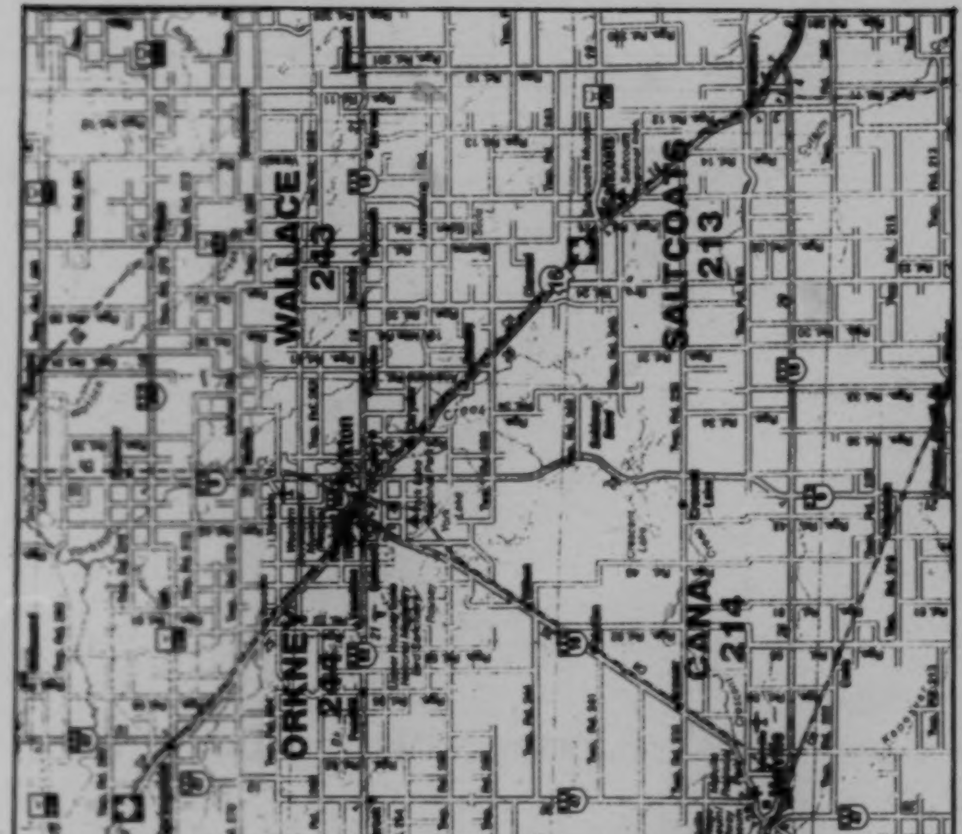

L'viv (Lemberg)
Striy
Ulychno

USSR Map of western Ukraine, 1990

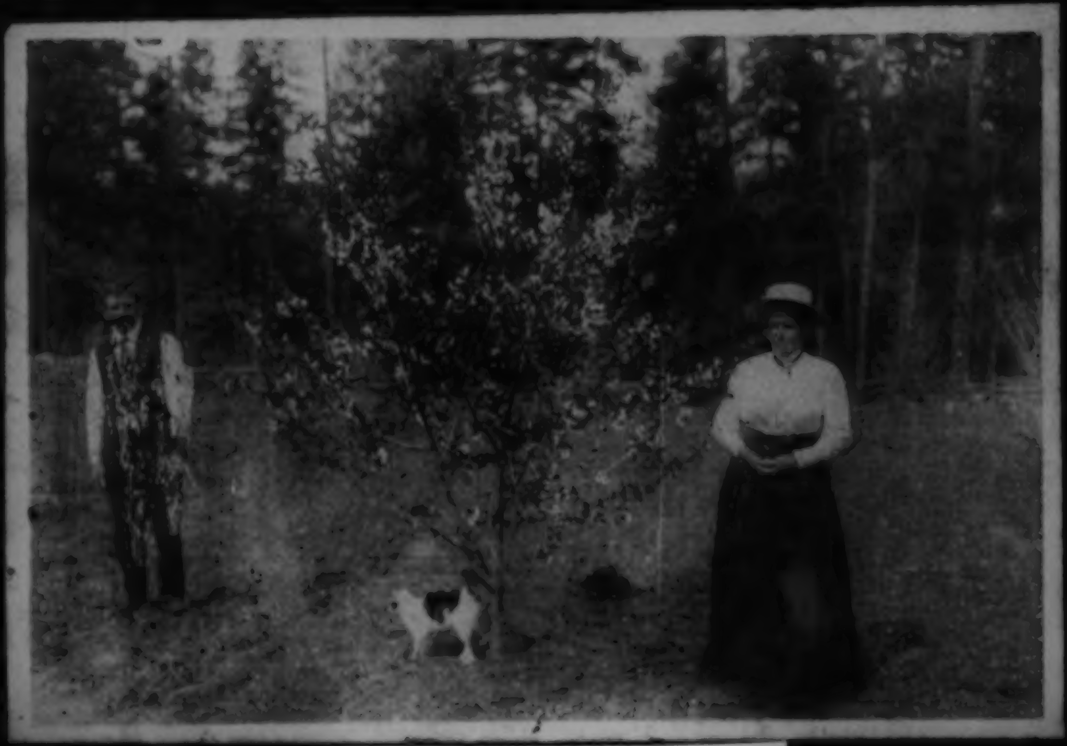

Striy
Ulychno

Map of western Ukraine, 1983
Taken from ethnographic study, *Boikivshchyna*


Glendon
St. Paul
Willingdon
EDMONTON
Soda Lake
Alberta
Rand McNally, 1998


WALLACE
243
SALTCOATS
213
ORKNEY
244
CANA
214
GARRY 245
STANLEY
215
Birmingham
ON ACCORD
246
LYMET
216

Southern Saskatchewan
MapArt Publishing, 2002

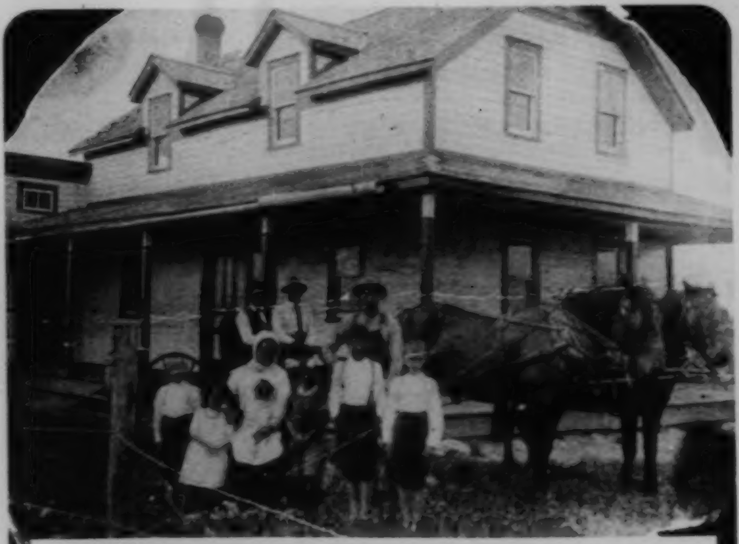


ca. 1907-1913
Ivan S and his wife, Elena Koropets'ka S
Colville, Washington

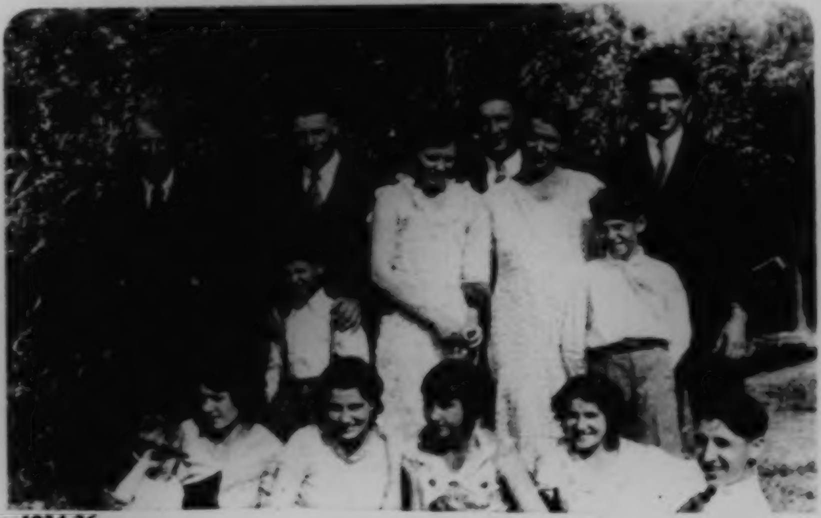
ca. 1907-1913
Konstantyn (Gus), Alex, Bill S, three of the sons of Ivan and Elena S
Colville, Washington

NANCY
BILL
SAM

1910
The R family.
(l to r) Alex, John (Ivan) holding Nancy, Bill, Maria (holding Katherine), Sam



ca. 1913
The R family
(l to r, top) John (Ivan) R, Bill S, Konstantyn (Gus) S
(l to r, bottom) Bill, Katherine, Maria holding baby Anne, Al, Sam



ca. 1934-36
The R family
(l to r, top) John (Ivan) R, John Z (married Nancy R), Katie H (married to Bill R), Bill R, Maria S R., George R
(l to r, middle) Orest Z, Walter R
(l to r, bottom) Leonard Z, Nancy R (married to John Z), Vera R, Margaret R, Alice R, and Al R

1926
Wedding photo of John Z and Nancy R

ca. 1938
Maksym and Annie H.
Birmingham, SK

ca. 1920
The K family

(l to r, top row) Peter, Anna holding Pauline, John (Jack), Nellie, Andrew, Annie
(l to r, bottom row, next to mother and Pauline) Kay, Mike, Bill

ca. 1938
The K women
(l to r, top) Kay and Nellie
(l to r, middle) Annie and Anna (mother)
(l to r, bottom) Olga, Pauline